

From Judy and Robert Thompson 185 South 4th St. St, Helens, OR 97051 503.397.6056

4/3/2025 2025 Support HB 2467 I am attaching my testimony from 2021 in hopes of helping all of us to be able to get help for those in mental health crisis. We read their story in the Oregonian 4/2/25 Our family's heart goes out to Mathew and Sally Padrow family.

Padrows will be testifying today Thursday 4/3/25. Please hear them with every ounce of common sense in your being. We are all begging to be able to get help for people in the grips of psychosis before horrible things happen. Getting help after the fact, we all know is too late.

Please accept the guidance that Chris Bouneff, Executive Director of NAMI Oregon is stating in HB 2467.

My Introduction From 2021

Judy Thompson, St. Helens, OR, I serve as Chairperson for NAMI Columbia County and a NAMI member. Our family lives with generational challenges of mental illness.

I am here to speak in regards to SB 187.

I will speak of our adult son, age 49. Son was diagnosed in 1999 with bi-polar, underlying schizophrenia (now known as schizo-effective disorder). Son was at a high point with job, as his laser cutting company wanted to make him a partner in the company. Multiple factors created the perfect storm and he had his first psychosis. With consistently failed work attempts and severity of illness, son was awarded Social Security Disability. For the most part he has lived independently. Son has been a client with Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH) since 1999.

Over the years, Son has had several hospitalizations, has ended up in jail multiple times. Yet, our family is one of the lucky ones, we have managed to stay intact. Faced with his care to obtain insurances, afford medications, be engaged with his doctors and caseworkers, working with legal issues, financial and morale support we strive to maintain a decent quality of life.

My concerns like many parents with mentally ill adult children is how will a decent quality of life be maintained when we are aging out and can no longer provide and advocate for them. We must have in place a way our adult children in psychosis will get the medical help they need when they ask for help and most important when they are in a state of mind that they refuse medical help.

What Happened

I want to share an episode we are still working through that started in Fall 2019.

Son had 4 caseworkers in a year.

Prescriber consistently cancelled and rescheduled son's appointments.

Prescriber Error had son on toxic dosing of Zyprexa.

Son discovered his pre-packed pill packs had wrong medications in them.

Prescriber prescribed a new medication, follow up on new medication was cancelled

Son had adverse effect to medication and stop taking.

Son lost faith in care, began to manage his own decisions on taking medication.

Son's mental stability began to decline with escalating symptoms of psychosis.

Attempts to get help through son's care providers were not successful.

Wellness checks resulted in son does not meet criteria for any sort of intake hold to the hospital. Law enforcement officer spoke with son via phone, officer reported, son seemed a little off, telling officer he

was a U.S. Marshall, other than that he seemed ok.

The month of May was a total nightmare, son in severe psychosis, thinks he has electromagnetic field around him, horrible Facebook post referring to God and disturbing thoughts, son tells me there are imposters all over town of my husband and me and that we need to do something about it.

Son does not think he is sick.

May 23rd 2020 Son is very sick, paranoid, has all electronics covered with sheets, messing with his apartment's power meters. I can see this because he lives across the street from us. I call CCMH crisis line, they determine situation warrants response, we wait for over an hour praying son doesn't take off. I call and check on where is crisis staff, person tells me he has not left yet because he is waiting for his daughter to get home. Son takes off.

May 26th son is in highspeed chase on Hwy. 30. State Patrol "pinged" him at 114 miles per hour. At one point son did stop and then took off again, son thought the State Patrol was going to kill him. Son gets to City of Rainier, sideswipes a car that hits another car, son's car rolls off road, landing on it's side, car is totaled. Son manages to get out passenger side and is surrounded by 3 different law enforcement agencies, officers have guns drawn. Son introduces self as a U.S. Marshall and is on a mission to rescue his dad. State Patrol reports son was oddly laughing and seemed to have no concept of what just happened.

Two people taken to hospital minor injuries. Son is taken to jail, booked with DUI and multiple charges.

At this point I was sure he would be sent to hospital because the highspeed chase proves he is a danger to self and others.

Wrong, clinical director CCMH tells me because a DUI was sited, they cannot determine if it was alcohol or mental illness that caused this event.

I proceed to ask what can we do to get son help because he is severe psychosis. Clinical director tells me "CCMH won't have much success with a civil commitment, law enforcement might be able to do, however, you have the best chance of getting a civil commitment ". I ask how do I do this? Clinical director said I can go online, get form and then have filed at the courthouse, then CCMH has 2 weeks to do evaluation and respond back to courts.

June 17th 2020. 2 hour Civil Commitment trial determined Son needed inpatient treatment for mental illness. During the trial Son's tox screen report came in and he had no drugs or alcohol in his system at the time of the wreck.

June 18th 2020. Son was transported to Unity Behavioral Center in Portland for 37 days obtain mental stability.

Son then transported to Telecare Recovery in Gresham.

Civil Commitment order withdrawn on September 15, 2020.

Son returned to his apartment.

Son has now has a different Prescriber, a competent caseworker, compliant with medications and treatment plan.

Legal Court proceeding are still in process. At this point it looks like he will be under Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) with a non-criminal felony. Son will be able to stay in his apartment and continue care with CCMH.

What Helped

Sadly, implementing a Civil Commitment was the only way to get the undisputable needed medical help. Once Son began medication, he quickly responded and his mind calmed and he recovered. It is beyond gut wrenching and cruel to standby and watch a person decompensate into severe psychosis and knowing the longer someone stays in this severity of illness, they are risking a chance at a better outcome to stability. Getting care saved our son's life.

Briefly describe what helped in your recovery

Relieved, son finally obtained inpatient hospital care, was safe, not likely to hurt self or others, we felt hopeful and confident once medications were on board we would get our son's mind back. Unity Behavioral Center doctors diagnosed serve mania and declare "we can treat this"! Medications are a total necessity for his mental stability.

When mentally stable, son was transferred to Telecare for recovery he had resources to manage the trauma he experienced and begin to lay ground work for legal issues that would come.

How am I different today

During all of this chaos of our son's mental illness the reality of roadblocks to get needed care are well rooted in laws that seem to allow individuals to be overcome by their severe mental illness. An individual's severe mental illness risk resulting in loss of life to self and others, bodily damage to self and others, costs of hospitalization, costs of incarceration, property loss, alienating loved ones. We will not let our son's illness be in vain, we will advocate to reduce the roadblocks to care and find strength from others that are doing the same.

What is the need or problem

In our son's case we all knew he needed inpatient care to regain mental stability from the quality of care issues that started in September of 2019. It should not have taken a Civil Commitment done by parents to get needed care. CCMH needed to intervene when it was clear their long-time client was in psychosis and they openly knew this client would only get worse if not treated. With our situation prescriber, clinical directors, caseworkers, law enforcement were all in agreement son need medical intervention, however, did not meet criteria for being taken to hospital against his will. I would be told the system is broken and our hands are tied.

What will help others Early intervention is key for treating someone slipping into psychosis. It would be of great benefit to have effective laws that would assist individuals, families, and agencies when an individual is in the grips of severe psychosis that a period of inpatient time be mandated to evaluate needed care. Rule of imminent danger to self or others is an extremely limited window of opportunity to get an individual into care. Our son was gravely disabled and we could not get a 72 hold, we had to do a Civil Commitment which is traumatizing for everyone. None of what happen to our son should have happened.

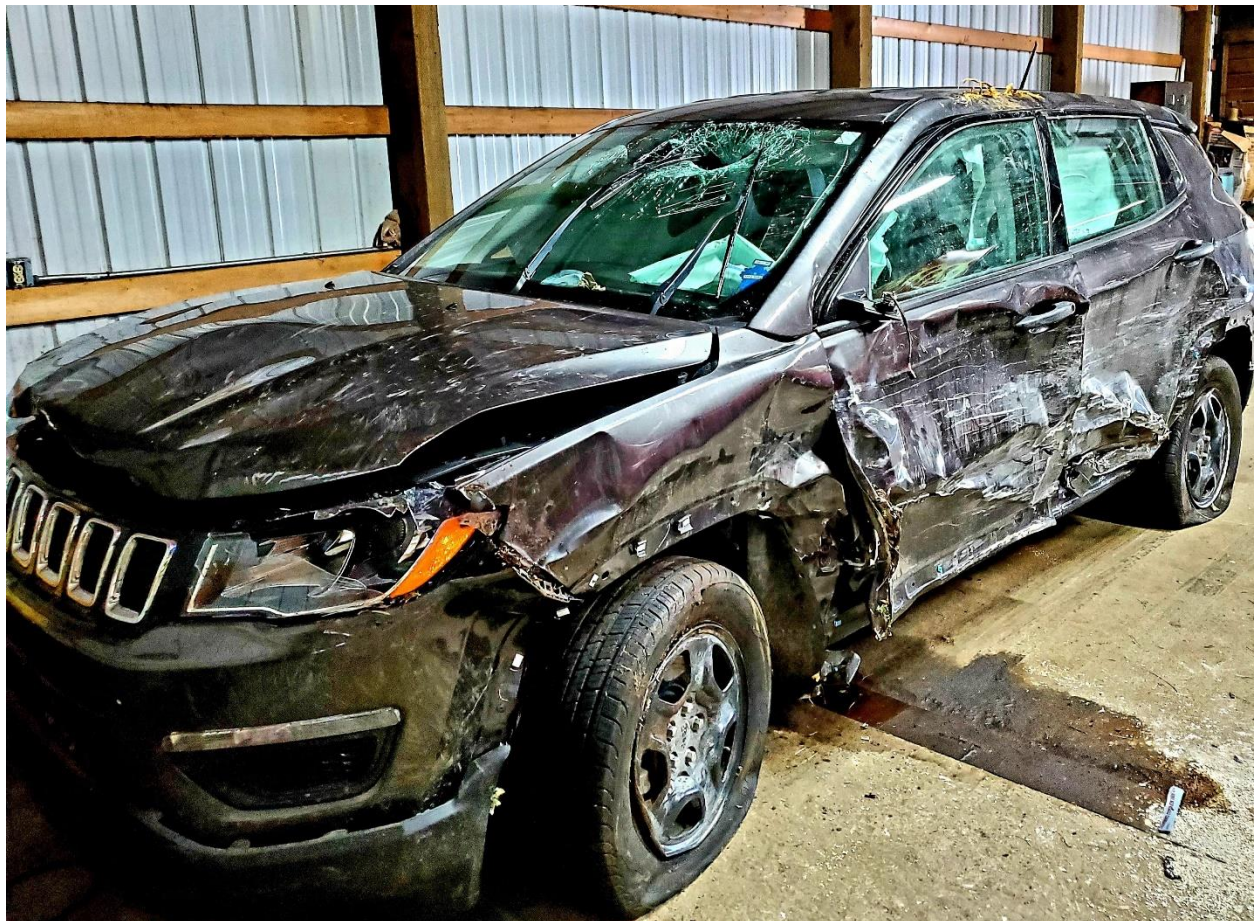
My Ask

I am asking on behalf of my family and so many others to please widen the window of opportunity for individuals who are demonstrating psychosis and do not think they are sick, that there be a process to at least ensure a 72 hour hold to evaluate state of mind. I wish you were able to spend 5 minutes with our son while he was so sick, you would understand the urgency we feel to create a pathway to needed care.

Thank You

for allowing me to speak today on behalf of SB 187 and thank you NAMI Oregon for advocating for us, you give us hope and belonging.

4/3/2025 This picture added to support HB 2467



Son's wrecked vehicle after high speed chase on Hwy 30, ended in Rainier when he hit another car that then hit another car. 2 people were taken to hospital, son taken to jail no medical care. The trauma that the people have from this, including son will never go away and one man's hand was permanently damaged. This did not have to happen.