

Submitter: Jamie McKay
On Behalf of:
Committee: House Committee on Rules
Measure: HB 3835A

Chair Bowman, Vice Chair Drazen, Vice Chair Pham, and Members of the Committee

My name is Jamie McKay, I am a policy analysis for the Office of Training, Investigation and Safety. While I have only been with this agency for a year, I have over 20 years of experience working with children, youth, and adolescents in Oregon in a variety of different settings. Through my career I have seen a significant reduction in services available to the children in Oregon, without the appropriate support the children are suffering. Oregon is facing a crisis regarding services for the children most in need. I have worked for different systems and organizations caring for children and all have voiced the same concern, children have an increase in complex needs, and we lack the providers to do this work. Over the past 10 years we have seen a drastic reduction in our providers to work with youth with the highest needs. We need to take steps now to reform our system, so we have a stronger community of support for our children. HB 3835A and the -5 amendment take necessary steps to reform our system.

Keeping Oregon's children safe and providing them environments where they can develop and thrive is a top priority. HB 3835A does not reduce the safety of our most vulnerable children it provides clear and consistent standards so we can ensure our children are safe. Lack of consistency in current regulations creates uncertainty which leads to a culture of fear and lack of action. Providing consistency regarding use of restraint or seclusion gives providers clarity to keep all children safe. Providers working with our most vulnerable populations have a responsibility to keep all children in their care safe and they need a clear understanding on how and when they should act to ensure every youth remains safe. HB 3835A proves consistency and clarity to ensure child abuse is recognized and addressed when it occurs.

OTIS is committed to working collaboratively with partners to ensure a successful implementation if this bill passes. This includes working with providers to ensure a clear understanding of the bill and how the changes impact their work.

HB 3835A takes important steps for rebuilding Oregon's system to serve our children with the most complex needs. This is why I support HB 3835A.

Thank you for your consideration.