

Chair Pham, Vice-Chairs Edwards and Javadi, members of the committee,

I am Henrietta Knox, from Linn County. I am a licensed professional counselor.

I am testifying in support of HB 4028.

I own and operate a group practice that offers mental health services to over 1600 Oregonians. We employ 60 therapists.

In 2021, when our company was still small, a CCO conducted an audit. This CCO is owned by a large for-profit national corporation that reports billions of dollars of revenue per year.

The findings represented \$13.000 and were subject to extrapolation, totaling the recoupment to nearly a quarter of a million dollars.

We were not given a detailed explanation of the errors for the majority of the findings. We were not allowed to correct clerical errors; this would be considered fraud.

We learned that the members of the audit team may not be licensed mental health providers and that these audit teams were paid commissions over the amount of money recouped from Providers.

This means that tax dollars distributed by OHA to providers to offer services to Oregonians can be recouped by large for-profit corporations to pay bonuses to their possibly unqualified staff, without significant justification for the recoupment.

The company told us we would appeal, they would audit even more thoroughly, and would implement fines on top of the recoupment and extrapolation.

Fortunately, a staff member of the local CCO had advocated for us. The extrapolation was removed, and after appeal, we owed \$6000. Our Company would not have survived a recoupment of a quarter million dollars, leaving therapists unemployed and hundreds of clients without services.

Our overhead costs have increased tremendously since we hired compliance staff and spent significant time training employees. The intense compliance demands also led to the loss of employees because the demands are too much.

I ask you to please pass HB 4028

The fear of audits ultimately restricts access to care for Oregonians, since fewer providers are willing to work with insurance and OHP. This leaves thousands of people without help.

Chair Pham and members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care, thank you for this opportunity to share our experience with you, and for your commitment to improving the quality and accessibility of mental health services for Oregonians.

I would be happy to answer any questions.

Henrietta Knox, LPC