

Submitter: Dane Ward

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4028

On behalf of Connections First, a mental health group practice serving clients across Oregon, I am writing to express our strong support for HB 4028.

Connections First provides outpatient behavioral health services to individuals, couples, children, and families. Like many small and mid-sized community-based providers, we operate with limited administrative resources while striving to deliver ethical, high-quality, and accessible care. Increasingly aggressive and unpredictable insurance audit practices have created significant financial and operational strain on our clinicians and administrative staff.

Each year, audits become more frequent and more punitive, often relying on shifting and unclear documentation standards. Even when services are medically necessary and appropriately delivered, minor technical discrepancies can result in retroactive denials or repayment demands. These practices create chronic financial uncertainty for providers and divert valuable clinical and administrative time away from patient care.

This ongoing risk of lost income contributes to burnout and forces many clinicians to consider leaving insurance networks or the profession entirely. When providers are pushed out of the system, access to care for insured patients is reduced—particularly for those who already face barriers to mental health services.

HB 4028 recognizes the disproportionate power insurers currently hold over small and independent behavioral health providers and acknowledges the growing pattern of retroactive denials and recoupments for legitimately delivered services. By establishing clearer standards and reasonable protections, this bill helps restore balance and fairness to the audit process.

Passage of HB 4028 will support provider sustainability, strengthen network participation, and ultimately protect patient access to mental health care throughout Oregon. It allows clinicians and agencies like ours to focus on what we are trained to do: provide effective, compassionate behavioral health treatment to our communities.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to safeguarding access to mental health care across our state. We respectfully urge your support of HB 4028.