

Submitter: Laurie Fieldman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4028

Subject: Support for HB 4028 – Protecting Mental Health Providers and Patient Access

Dear Chair Pham and Members of the Behavioral Health Committee

My name is Laurie B. Fieldman, and I have been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for over 20 years. I proudly work at Health Allies Counseling in Portland, Oregon where we accept almost all insurances including OHP. I am writing to express my strong support for HB 4028. This bill provides essential protection for small and independent mental health providers that is necessary for us to continue to deliver high-quality care. The insurance companies audit more and more frequently for smaller and smaller details that have no bearing on the client's care, but have a great impact on the professional's ability to provide that care. I am constantly double and triple checking my documentation, utilizing time and mental energy that is needed by the clients I serve. The PTSD they suffer from deserves 110% of my attention and skill, but that is not possible when 8 hour days become 10 hour days because of the concern that insurance companies will audit the documentation with a fine-tooth comb and changing expectations. I have considered leaving insurance networks, but that goes against my own belief that every human is entitled to mental health care. When patients suffer and don't get the quality care they need to heal, our society suffers as well. HB4028 is a necessity to help mitigate the power that the insurance companies wield over mental health providers. It will help to establish clearer standards which will help providers to continue focusing on that which is most important: providing the very best care to each client that is brave enough to come to therapy and try to heal. The bill supports providers, clients, and our society as a whole.

Thank you for your leadership and for your support of HB 4028. As a professional and as a human being, I appreciate your commitment to protecting access to mental health care across our state.

Sincerely,
Laurie B. Fieldman, LCSW
Health Allies Counseling
Portland, OR