

Submitter: Jessica Teigland
On Behalf Of: OIMHP
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4028

Chair Pham, Vice-Chairs Edwards and Javadi, members of the committee:
My name is Jessica Teigland, I'm a Licensed Professional Counselor at a small non-profit practice here in Salem and I'm here today to testify in support of HB 4028. The passing of this bill would restore much of the autonomy that has been strategically stripped from practitioners working tirelessly for their clients' care. In the 12 years I've spent in the field, I've seen the arbitrary medical management of what insurers call "coding advisor programs." For a practitioner like me who is trained in a specialty that requires 90 minute appointments instead of the standard 60 minute appointment, this makes me an "outlier" to insurers, and unless we have Bills like HB 4028 to help us, I effectively have a "clawback target" on my back, just for adhering to evidence-based therapy modalities. I've received letters from insurers notifying me of my "heavy use" of CPT Code 90837, a 60 minute talk therapy session. I've been reminded that I am to use CPT Code 90834, which is a 45 minute talk therapy session. For those of you who are doing the quick mental math right now, that means insurers, who do not know my clients' history, diagnosis, nor treatment plan, are not just insuring, they're misdirecting treatment fidelity as well. Until insurers and behavioral health providers are on an equal playing field, mental health care can never truly reach its fullest potential in Oregon, and I believe we can be a leading example of the highest quality care. The people we serve should never be reduced to a simple billing code, where the amount of care they receive is decided by a computer. By passing this bill, I believe it would be more than just a win for behavioral health providers. It would be a win for the clients we serve now, and the clients we will be able to serve in the future. Thank you for your time today. Please support House Bill 4028!