

Submitter: Brian Whitmer  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4028

Dear Chair Pham and Committee Members,

My name is Brian Whitmer, and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) practicing in Portland, Oregon. I am writing to urge your "Yes" vote on HB 4028.

While I am committed to providing high-quality, ethical care to my community, the current climate of insurance audits has made it increasingly difficult to sustain a private practice and to support the clinicians working under the umbrella of my group practice. Currently, insurance companies hold a disproportionate amount of power, often changing documentation rules without clear notice and conducting retroactive audits that feel more like predatory recoupment tactics than quality assurance.

I want to share how this specifically impacts my ability to provide care:

**Administrative Burden:** I spend significant unpaid hours every week obsessing over documentation—not to improve clinical outcomes, but purely out of fear that a minor technicality will be used to claw back payments for services already rendered.

**Provider Burnout:** The constant threat of retroactive denials for legitimately delivered care creates a level of professional instability that leads to burnout. Like many of my colleagues, I have had to weigh the risk of remaining paneled with certain insurance companies against the financial safety of my practice.

**Access to Care:** When the administrative "hoops" become too high, providers leave networks. This bill is vital to ensuring that I and other LCSWs can afford to keep our doors open to Oregonians who rely on their insurance to access mental health services.

HB 4028 provides common-sense solutions by requiring insurance companies to post their documentation rules clearly and limiting how far back they can reach for recoupment. By removing the financial barriers that stalled this bill in the past, you have a clear path to protect the mental health workforce in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and for your support of the behavioral health community.

Sincerely,

Brian Whitmer, LCSW Portland, Oregon