

February 5, 2026

Senate Early Childhood & Behavioral Health Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson and members of the committee:

We are students at the University of Oregon's Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health in Portland, and we are writing to express our strong support for SB 1547, which would establish a licensed behavioral health and wellness practitioner role under the Board of Psychology.

As members of the first graduating classes of students pursuing degrees in child behavioral health, we are deeply committed to addressing the urgent mental health needs of youth across Oregon. Every day in our studies and practical training, we see how much support kids need—and how important it is to continue strengthening the systems around them. Oregon continues to rank near the bottom nationally for overall youth mental health, and families are struggling to access the help their children need. We chose this academic path because we want to be part of the solution.

SB 1547 is a critical part of making that commitment real. It creates a clear professional identity for graduates of the Ballmer Institute and similar programs, recognizing our training and preparing us to serve youth in meaningful, supervised roles. Just as importantly, it is a necessary step for our work to be billable, which makes these services sustainable for schools, community organizations, and clinics. Without this licensure pathway, many of us will be well-trained and ready to help—but lack a way to practice fully, be reimbursed, or stay in the field long-term.

Please support SB 1547. We're ready to be part of the change Oregon's youth need. With your support, we can help build a healthier, more hopeful future for children across our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Madeline Dell
Cailin Dunbar
Ernie Leyva
Sophia Morgan
Esther Paul
Carson Person

Students at the Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health
University of Oregon