

Submitter: Valentina Pishchanskaya-Cayanan
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4028

I am a licensed marriage and family therapist in Oregon and the owner of Cayanan Counseling and Wellness, LLC. I am writing in strong support of HB 4028.

As a provider, one of the most significant and ongoing sources of stress in my work is the lack of clarity and consistency around billing and clinical documentation expectations. Despite making good-faith efforts to comply with payer requirements, there is a constant fear of audits and retroactive clawbacks that can reach back years into the past. This uncertainty creates a persistent sense of instability—not just financially, but professionally.

Mental health providers are already experiencing disproportionately high rates of burnout. Many of us carry large caseloads simply to make ends meet, as reimbursement rates often do not reflect the complexity or intensity of the work we do. On top of that, we are expected to navigate opaque billing rules, shifting interpretations of medical necessity, and the ever-present risk that a minor documentation issue could result in a devastating financial penalty. Practicing under these conditions is exhausting and increasingly unsustainable.

I hold specific cultural and linguistic competencies that allow me to expand access to care for clients who need culturally responsive services in their native language. These skills are critical in a state with growing immigrant and refugee populations, where language and cultural barriers often prevent people from accessing mental health care at all. However, despite this added value to the system, the administrative and financial risks associated with insurance participation remain just as high.

Because of this, I was very selective about which insurance panels I chose to credential with, informed by the numerous horror stories shared by colleagues who have experienced audits, clawbacks, and severe financial consequences despite acting in good faith. Even so, the panels I am currently contracted with remain a constant source of stress. The fear of audits and retroactive penalties is ever-present and weighs heavily on daily clinical decision-making.

My clinical work focuses heavily on trauma, immigrant communities, and individuals experiencing significant mental health distress. These clients often require longer-term, consistent care and present with complex trauma histories. The reality that I must constantly consider whether using a clinically appropriate diagnosis or billing code “too often” could trigger an audit places administrative fear in direct conflict with clinical judgment and ethical care.

This pressure directly impacts access to care. Therapists who are burned out, overworked, and fearful of audits are more likely to reduce their caseloads, leave insurance panels, or leave the profession entirely. Oregon already faces a significant shortage of mental health providers, particularly for Medicaid recipients and other vulnerable populations. If providers like myself are forced to exit panels due to unsustainable administrative risk, the strain on an already fragile mental health system will only intensify.

HB 4028 is a critical step toward reducing unnecessary fear and instability for mental health providers. By increasing transparency, fairness, and predictability in billing and audit processes, this bill would help retain providers, reduce burnout, and preserve access to culturally and linguistically appropriate care for the communities who need it most.

I urge you to support HB 4028; not only for providers, but for the long-term stability and accessibility of mental health care in Oregon.

Respectfully,
Valentina Cayanán, LMFT
Owner, Cayanán Counseling and Wellness, LLC