



To: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

Re: Support bill SB 1547

Date: February 5, 2026

Latino Network was founded in 1996 by advocates for the needs of the growing Latinx community in Multnomah County. Since then, these grassroots beginnings have evolved into a continuum of services that support Latinx individuals, families, and communities. Our programs currently focus on education, advocacy & leadership, health & wellness, economic justice, youth empowerment & violence prevention, and arts & culture, engaging nearly 11,000 community members throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties in the last year. We are the leading culturally-specific provider for Latinx youth, parent, and family services in the Portland area with the goal of serving the nearly 19% of Oregon's population who identify as Latinx or Hispanic.

Latino Network currently provides direct services to youth and families in Senate Districts 13-15 and 19-25 and House Districts 25, 26, 28, 29, 37, 40 and 42-50.

We support SB 1547, which establishes a new category of licensed behavioral health and wellness practitioners in Oregon, overseen by the Oregon Board of Psychology. These practitioners would be qualified to provide prevention-oriented services, including early identification of behavioral health concerns, psychoeducation, skills training, brief interventions, risk identification and referral, and collaboration with other providers.

In many communities across Oregon, families are currently forced to schedule behavioral health appointments months in advance to ensure their children can see a behavioral therapist. For working families—particularly immigrant and low-income families—these delays often mean children go without support until concerns escalate into crises.

By passing SB 1547, Oregon can significantly reduce these wait times by allowing additional trained specialists to provide early and preventive behavioral health services. This will ease the burden on pediatric clinics that may have only one behavioral health provider—or none at all—and are already overwhelmed by demand. In many cases, these clinics lack providers who speak Spanish or have the cultural knowledge necessary to reflect and understand the lived experiences of the children they serve.

This new role can be embedded in youth-serving organizations, expanding access to timely, life-saving early interventions and helping families connect their children to care sooner. With rigorous training in evidence-based practices and culturally responsive care, these practitioners will ensure more children receive effective, culturally affirming behavioral health support—before they reach a point of crisis.



Please vote yes on SB 1547 which establishes a new category of licensed behavioral health and wellness practitioners in Oregon.

Thank you
Yesenia