

Submitter:

Althea Herrell

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Behavioral Health

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4028

Dear Chair Pham and Members of the Behavioral Health Committee,

My name is Althea Herrell, and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and the owner of an independent psychotherapy practice in Oregon. I am writing in strong support of HB 4028.

As a solo provider, I have seen how insurance practices have increasingly placed mental health clinicians in a precarious position. Audits have become more frequent, less transparent, and more punitive, often hinging on shifting or unclear documentation requirements rather than the quality or medical necessity of care. Even when clinicians are providing ethical, appropriate, and effective treatment, we remain at risk for denied claims or retroactive repayment demands based on minor technical issues.

This ongoing uncertainty creates real financial and emotional strain for small and independent providers. Over time, it pushes many clinicians to reduce or eliminate insurance participation altogether. When that happens, access to care suffers—especially for clients who rely on in-network services and already face barriers to treatment.

HB 4028 recognizes the power imbalance that currently exists between insurance companies and small mental health practices. It responds to a troubling pattern of retroactive denials and recoupments for legitimately delivered services and takes meaningful steps toward restoring fairness and accountability in the system.

By establishing clearer standards and reasonable protections, HB 4028 will help providers like me remain financially viable, continue serving insured clients, and focus our time and energy where it belongs: providing thoughtful, effective mental health care to Oregonians. This bill supports providers, yes—but more importantly, it supports the health and stability of our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 4028 and for your continued commitment to strengthening Oregon's behavioral health system.

Sincerely,

Althea Herrell, LCSW, CCTP