



**Anderson DuBoise**  
*Director of Strategic Initiatives*

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10808 NE Halsey St. Portland, OR 97220

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, I am Anderson DuBoise, and I serve as the youth advocacy organization representative on the statewide Systems of Care Advisory Council and as Director of Strategic Initiatives at REAP Inc. and alumni of the program. REAP is a youth leadership organization that excels within the work of developing the next generation of leaders.

I am here today in strong support of SB 1547, which would create a Licensed Behavioral Health and Wellness Practitioner.

As the Director of Strategic Initiatives, I oversee our Reflections, alternative in-school suspension leadership program. I support my staff now to work with youth who are undergoing serious trauma, loss, and sometimes addiction. Schools and families are relieved to partner with our staff who work with school clinicians for coordinated care. In fact last week one principal used the word, "impossible" to describe what work would be like without our partnership in service to the youth.

I am seeing firsthand how many young people are struggling—and how hard it can be for families to find help early. Our youth are showing signs that they need support long before a crisis, but accessibility to trained and licensed support is oftentimes too late as licensed staff in many schools are part time or occupied with non-clinical aspects of the role in order to hold the school together in these times of crisis. I just received an update that one of the middle schools we serve in the 13 school districts we partner with currently does not have a school counselor or social worker.

SB 1547 offers a practical, community-centered solution. Licensed Behavioral Health and Wellness Practitioners would be able to work in youth-serving organizations like ours, as well as in schools, pediatrician's offices, and community programs—places where young people already feel safe and connected. This role would help ensure that more kids can be identified early, supported sooner, and connected to the right resources before problems become more acute.

My staff who often come from the same communities as the youth we serve want to help but face obstacles to pursuing advanced degrees. Creating a clear, attainable pathway at the bachelor's level—paired with strong supervision and training—SB 1547 helps build a workforce that is more diverse and more reflective of the communities it serves.

These practitioners would work as part of a team and under supervision. They would not diagnose, provide therapy, prescribe medication, or practice independently. These clear boundaries protect youth and families while expanding access to meaningful, prevention-focused support.

It is clear that SB 1547 fills a critical gap in this time of need and in the future to come. It strengthens community-based supports that help young people transform their trajectories and our schools achieve the impossible.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon's children, youth, and families.

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Phone 503.688.2784

Website [WWW.reapusa.org](http://WWW.reapusa.org)

Address 10808 N E Halsey St. Portland, OR