

VERY STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 4059 –

An Act that Deceptively Endangers Oregon's Children

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

CAVEAT!!! HB 4059 is NOT just trying to change a few words in the Definition of Abuse or raise the Burden of Proof. This Act would PREVENT Oregon from STOPPING ABUSERS, especially the most serious and repetitive ones. It would **LEGALIZE STRANGER DANGER** by removing/redefining the very Child Protective Laws that Oregonians depend upon today.

At essence, HB 4059 is a **Trojan Horse** as written, and even as amended, which would PREVENT even the accusation, mandatory reporting, investigation and/or prosecution of Child Abuse cases against Anyone Other Than the Parents, Care-Providers or Others with Direct Authority over Oregon's children and youth.

In short, HB 4059 **attacks Oregon families** at risk by ignoring even the possibility of Child Abuse from anyone else. As others have noted, HB 4059 also disadvantages BIPOC communities, non-English and ESL speakers, children with communication differences due to disabilities or catastrophic trauma, families in financial crisis, and other marginalized groups.

In other words, as was **confirmed** by Daniel, the Chief of Staff to Rep. Hartman, yet who barely mentioned her name, if at all, during his lengthy testimony about the bill January 14th, ALL OTHER PERPETRATORS would be Free From Child Abuse Investigations or Charges entirely, subject only to Law Enforcement requiring near certainty "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt" for prosecution or conviction.

As Daniel has admitted in his own testimony, ANY STRANGER or Non-custodian of a child would be **Exempt from Child Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation investigations** for ANY REASON (including Rape, Incest, Serious Harm, Torture, Murder....) including KIDNAPPERS, INTERNET SEXUAL PREDATORS, HUMAN TRAFFICKERS, and so many more.

For me, it is truly inconceivable that such a potentially catastrophic timebomb of an idea has made it this far toward being considered by the Oregon legislature at all. **It is time we correct short-staffing at CPS with better recruitment and training, not child sacrifice.**

