

Submitter: Denice Searcy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4059

NO on HB 4059

While some modifications have been made to the "duty of care" provisions, the core of this bill remains a direct threat to the safety of Oregon's most vulnerable children. Your desperation for money is clearly evident to the point of ridiculousness. Talk about government overreach and sheer control for the sake of power; no common sense here.

The Act changes what "threatened harm" means when talking about hurting a child. It says that DHS can only look into some reports of child abuse. It also makes a rule for how certain reports of child abuse are resolved.

Narrowing "Abuse" to Financial Capacity is a trap. HB 4059 modifies "negligent treatment" to account for a parent's financial ability. The bill conditions this on the parents' duty to accept "appropriate services". This creates a subjective "compliance trap" where the state's failure to provide accessible services, such as specialized respite for a child with a disability, could be used to justify intervention while simultaneously raising the bar so high that the state ignores the child until a crisis occurs.

Prevention works only when adults are allowed to act early — not after damage has already been done. By changing the definition of "threatened harm," HB 4059 risks allowing serious psychological and emotional abuse to go unrecognized and unaddressed until it escalates. Children with disabilities and autism are especially vulnerable, as they may have difficulty reporting mistreatment or being believed when they do.

Vote NO on HB 4059