

**Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,**

My name is Erika Torralba, and I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB 4042.**

HB 4042 hands decision-making power to systems that are not equipped to understand a youth's trauma history, disability-related needs, cultural background, or long-term well-being. This shifts authority away from child-centered evaluation and creates significant risk of placements that do not reflect what the young person actually needs.

This bill also increases the likelihood that youth will remain in facilities for longer periods of time by expanding DHS authority to extend placement. This is directly at odds with best practices, the federal goals outlined in the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), and Oregon's stated commitment to reducing institutional reliance.

I am the mother of a disabled brown youth with complex medical needs and a history of systemic trauma. I write to you from lived experience. My child has endured several mental health crises—moments when their emotional and physical safety depended on care, compassion, and trauma-informed support. Instead, the responses they received did not prioritize their safety or well-being.

While I was told by medical providers that many patients do not remember these events and that my child would likely not recall their crisis, my child remembers everything — every restraint, every conversation about them, every decision made without their voice. That is the harm of responding to crises with systems instead of support. This is trauma they will carry with them for the rest of their life.

As a mother, I ask you to please oppose HB 4042. Every child and young adult deserves to be safe, supported, and cared for during their most vulnerable moments—not placed in institutions because a system found it convenient.

Thank you for your consideration.