



February 23, 2026

Chair Sara Gelsner Blouin
Vice-Chair Diane Linthicum
Oregon Senate Human Services Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to HB 4042: Protecting Youth Safety, Oversight, and Accountability in Congregate Care

Chair Gelsner Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of 11:11 Media Impact, we write to express our strong opposition to HB 4042. 11:11 Media Impact is a survivor-led organization committed to ending abuse in youth residential care and advancing policies that protect children, strengthen accountability, and prioritize family-based and community-based supports.

HB 4042 would move Oregon backward by weakening core safeguards designed to prevent harm in congregate care and ensure regulatory accountability when harm occurs. The bill's provisions would expand risk to children in state custody and reduce transparency for families, advocates, and oversight entities.

HB 4042 Weakens Child Safety and Oversight

1) It increases the likelihood of dangerous placements in unlicensed settings.

HB 4042 would allow youth to be placed in settings that are not licensed as child-caring agencies. Licensing exists for a reason. It establishes enforceable standards, monitoring, and accountability. Placement in unlicensed settings, whether in Oregon or out of state, reduces visibility into conditions of care, complicates investigations, and can create gaps in oversight that children cannot afford.

2) It permits placement of children in adult settings.

Any policy change that allows youth to be placed in adult settings raises immediate safety concerns. Children in state care have limited ability to advocate for themselves and deserve heightened protections, not placements that increase exposure to harm.

3) It undermines the priority of family-based care and conflicts with the direction of modern child welfare policy.



HB 4042 lifts restrictions on length of stay in non-treatment congregate care and removes key guardrails that reinforce the importance of family foster care and community placement. Oregon should be strengthening supports that keep children connected to families and communities, including kinship placements, foster family support, stabilization services, and community-based behavioral health care, rather than loosening restrictions that can normalize longer stays in congregate care.

HB 4042 Risks Rolling Back Restraint and Seclusion Protections

HB 4042 would lift the cap on training programs a facility may use to certify families to impose restraint and seclusion. We support consistent, high-quality, trauma-responsive standards statewide, especially for emergency interventions. Restraint is not a routine practice. It is a high-risk intervention with well-documented potential for physical injury, psychological trauma, and, in the worst cases, death. Policy should strengthen oversight and prevention, reduce reliance on restraint, and ensure rigorous standards, not create conditions that make oversight and consistency harder to achieve.

HB 4042 Weakens Regulatory Accountability When Children Are Harmed

Most concerning, HB 4042 removes the mandate for ODHS to immediately take action to suspend or revoke a child-caring agency license when:

- A child dies as a result of abuse
- The child-caring agency fails to cooperate in an investigation
- The child-caring agency fails to take action to stop abuse even when it is known to be occurring

Oregon has learned, often through painful experience, that regulations without enforceable consequences do not protect children. When decisive action is delayed or optional, unsafe operators can remain open and children remain at risk.

Oregon Must Center the Voices of Youth, Survivors, and Families

We urge the Committee to prioritize the lived experience of youth, survivors, and families in these decisions. Too often, policies that expand provider flexibility are advanced despite opposition from those the system is intended to serve. Oregon should be strengthening rights and safety, not loosening standards in ways that increase risk and reduce accountability.

For these reasons, 11:11 Media Impact respectfully urges you to vote NO on HB 4042.



We are available as a resource to the Committee and welcome the opportunity to support youth-centered policies that improve safety, oversight, transparency, and community-based alternatives.

Respectfully,
Caroline Cole
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11:11 Media Impact