

RE: HB 4042 — Oppose

Senate Human Services Committee

Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026

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

My name is Mike Norman, and I live in Salem, Oregon. I'm submitting testimony in **strong opposition** to **HB 4042** because it rolls back basic protections for children in congregate care and weakens the safeguards that exist precisely because children have been harmed when oversight fails.

This bill moves Oregon in the wrong direction by expanding the circumstances in which children can be placed in **unlicensed settings**, including settings that may be out of state. HB 4042 is in opposition to Oregon's commitment to placing youth in **families and communities** whenever possible. Family-based care should remain the priority and ODHS needs to continue to uphold this priority and put youth and families first.

I am especially alarmed by provisions that would loosen guardrails around **restraint and seclusion**. Restraint and seclusion is traumatizing, it escalates crises, and it can be deadly. Youth and families need to experience restoration through ODHS intervention, not increased harm.

Finally, HB 4042 weakens accountability by removing clear mandates for ODHS to take immediate action to suspend or revoke licenses when agencies do not participate in investigations of harm or the death of a child and put the protection of the agency above the safety of the child.

Oregon should be listening to youth, survivors, families, and advocates—especially when providers support a measure and the people most impacted are raising serious concerns. Children in the custody of the state deserve the strongest safeguards we can provide.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **vote NO on HB 4042**.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to protecting Oregon's children.

Respectfully,

Mike Norman

Salem, Oregon