

OPPOSE HB 4042—BACK TO BOARDING SCHOOL BILL ENDANGERS KIDS AT RISK

INSTITUTIONS Are NOT Healthy FOR Children and Other Living Things!!!

They Never Have Been!.....Ask almost any Native American Elder who survived the Boarding School Era of forced institutionalizations, cultural genocide, family separations, neglect, abuse, sexual attacks, and worse.....

“Between 1819 and 1969 there were 408 government funded boarding schools across 37 states and territories, including twelve in Oregon.” [Horror In Oregon - A Tale Of Forced 'Education' In Indian Boarding Schools](#)

After more than 150 years of child pain and suffering, **“only” just less than 10,000 American Indian children remained in such institutions as of 2007!!!**

HB 4042 would give ANY child in its foster care, juvenile or mental health/emotional or intellectual disability systems “equal opportunity” to experience the dangers of such institutionalization---in or out of state-- first-hand – in violation of numerous laws and safeguards such as the IDEA Act’s guarantees of Free and Appropriate Education in the **LEAST RESTRICTIVE** Setting.

Re-naming them as Training Centers, Mental Health facilities or Camps, Homes, Boot Camps, or Youth Shelters doesn’t make Institutions safer, in fact:

Loosening Oregon’s Licensing Requirements Just makes Things Worse!

HB 4042 would allow placement of Oregon children in Unregulated, Out of State facilities NOT Licensed to Oregon’s requirements, NOT overseen by Oregon policies, NOT SAFE at best, even feeding into the “Troubled Teen” Industry even denounced by the **American Bar Association**.

“The “troubled teen” industry is a network of private youth programs, therapeutic boarding schools, residential treatment centers, religious academies, wilderness programs, and drug rehabilitation centers and it dates back at least 50 years. The facilities are operated by private companies, nonprofits, or faith-based groups and they promise to help youth with problems related to behavior, addiction, and eating disorders, and in some cases sexual orientation and gender identity. **Despite numerous allegations of serious abuse that date back decades, they continue to operate in a largely unregulated way.**”

<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/resources/newsletters/childrens-rights/five-facts-about-troubled-teen-industry>

AND the National Disability Rights Network of State Protection and Advocacy Agencies, such as Disability Rights Oregon:

“This problem is current, ongoing and is not limited to any one corporation or geographic region. As is documented in this report, P&A investigations have uncovered abuse in for-profit residential facilities across the nation -- from broken bones, fight clubs and sexual abuse by trusted staff, to forced isolation, shaming and the complete failure by some facilities to provide the mental health treatment that prompted placement in the first place. In some facilities, children quite literally do not receive enough food to grow normally and are housed in vermin-infested buildings. They are prevented from contact with their families and do not receive critical medical care in time to prevent serious injury. There are instances in which medication is administered as a “chemical restraint” to control behavior for staff convenience, rather than as intended to protect the health and safety of the child or others.” https://www.ndrn.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/NDRN_Desperation_without_Dignity_Final.pdf

Lowering Oregon’s Standards of Care for Child Placement is an Incredibly Bad Idea when the State is facing massive losses (\$29 Million Dollar Judgement + Five (5) Years of Defense Costs for Failure to Protect a Child from a KNOWN Predator in just one recent verdict) which left a toddler paralyzed for life.

[Jury awards \\$29M verdict against ODHS after toddler's ..](#)

Jan 24, 2026 — A jury issued a \$29 million verdict after a 2-year-old suffered "catastrophic abuse" after Oregon Department of Human Services failed to ...

<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/local/oregon/2026/01/24/jury-awards-29m-verdict-against-odhs-after-toddlers-paralyzation/88328038007>

AND nearly \$300 Million More is being sought in Sexual Abuse Lawsuits against Oregon's Youth Correctional System right now.....

<https://www.oregonlive.com/politics/2025/03/top-oregon-youth-authority-investigator-ignored-thousands-of-abuse-reports-over-years-records-show.html>

<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/local/oregon/2025/07/25/new-lawsuits-allege-sexual-abuse-oregon-youth-authority-facilities/85360794007>

Reducing Penalties for Rule Violations resulting in the **DEATHS** of Children, **REFUSALS TO STOP ONGOING ABUSE**, and/or **FAILURES TO COOPERATE/OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE** with Child Protection/Law Enforcement Authorities during Investigations **DEVALUE the Lives and Well-being of At-Risk Children**, whom Oregon must protect.

Oregon's Senator Jeff Merkley has been a National Champion for Protecting Children from **INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE!!!**

“Without oversight, residential treatment for troubled teens can turn into abuse. This bipartisan bill shines a light on the ‘troubled teen’ industry and its horrifying cases of lasting scars, broken bones, psychological damage, sexual abuse, and even death,” said Merkley, the lead sponsor of the *Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act in the Senate*. “Our bill is a huge first step in restoring accountability, ending abuse, and ensuring best practices. A child seeking help should never be harmed—we must ensure every child receives the very best care.”

<https://www.merkley.senate.gov/merkleys-bipartisan-stop-institutional-child-abuse-act-now-law>

Paris Hilton, a survivor of institutional child abuse in the so-called troubled teen industry, led reform efforts with lawmakers to prevent abuse and protect America's youth. [During a Capitol Hill press conference](https://www.koin.com/news/washington-dc/paris-hilton-asks-house-to-pass-bill-to-prevent-child-abuse) in December, Hilton shared her two-year ordeal with the troubled teen industry, including strip searches, isolation, beatings, and restraints, and used her platform to speak out on behalf of thousands of survivors across the nation.

<https://www.koin.com/news/washington-dc/paris-hilton-asks-house-to-pass-bill-to-prevent-child-abuse>

[\(19\) Video | Facebook](#) PARIS HILTON Describes her Lived Experiences as Institutionalized Abused Child and urges Congress to pass the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act sponsored by JEFF MERKLEY, Oregon Senator, with Bi-Partisan Support!!!

HB 4042 is a **HUGE STEP BACKWARDS** for Oregon and **WILL TOTALLY DESTROY** the Credibility of our **CHILD PROTECTION** and **OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY** Systems if passed.

AS SENATOR MERKLEY HAS SAID,

Let's **RESTORE ACCOUNTABILITY,**

STOP INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE, not enable it,

AND ENSURE BEST PRACTICES for Oregon's Vulnerable Children!!!

Within Homes and Families HERE in OREGON

Near to Parents, Siblings, Families and Extended Families, Friends, and Loved Ones

Where they can Build Futures with

LOCAL SUPPORT and COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

NOT be lost and forgotten as Generations of Institutionalized Children have already in our Not-Distant-At All, Very Recent Past.

