



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE

*Working together to promote quality lives*

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyers and the good members of the HHS Committee;

My name is Betsy Sweet, and I represent the Behavioral Health Community Collaborative – eight non-profit community based mental health agencies for children and adults. (Sweetser, Opportunity Alliance, Spurwink, Shalom House, KidsPeace, Volunteers of America, Gateway Community Services, Oxford County Mental Health Services).

I testify today in support of LD 1224 – getting Federal reimbursement and matching funds help for our crisis services so that they may be expanded to both serve unserved and underserved areas. It will also give us the resources to rework our 911 services and expand our 988 services to allow us to have an effective system for mental health crisis workers responding to emergency calls without having to involve law enforcement.

Oregon was the first state to get this federal help in 2022. There is nothing but good news out of that plan – way fewer calls involving law enforcement, way fewer people with mental health and SUD challenges ending up in the corrections system and people getting the services they need more efficiently and effectively.

This committee is well aware that our crisis system is under resourced and inadequate to meet the high demands. This bill is a win/win and makes all the sense in the world to get dollars currently being spent and any new dollars matched by the federal government so we can expand our reach.

Please take this common sense, economically smart and people centered legislation and pass it.

If the committee sees fit, we would ask that you make this an emergency bill so that this process can get started right away – the needs are that great.

I'd be happy to answer any questions.