



NEVADA RURAL CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

March 16, 2023

Assembly Committee on Education
AsmED@asm.state.nv.us

To the Esteemed Members of the Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of AB37 on behalf of the Rural Children's Mental Health Consortium. The mission of the Consortium is to advance an integrated system in which youth and their families/caregivers with mental health needs are accepted in their communities, feel meaningfully connected to services and supports in the least restrictive environment, and experience equity in opportunities to access care.

Children's mental health has been adversely affected by the ongoing shortage of mental health professionals. As just one example, a mental health facility in Reno that served children was recently closed due to staff shortages. By creating a behavioral health workforce development center, Nevada will have comprehensive resources to support students through all stages of their education towards these much-needed jobs. Students will feel supported and have the information they need to be successful, which the Consortium believes will improve healthcare for children.

Thank you for your consideration,

Melissa Washabaugh APRN, PMHNP-BC
Chair, Rural Children's Mental Health Consortium