



Marion County

OREGON

451 Division St. NE
Suite 200
PO Box 14500
Salem, OR 97309-5036

(503) 588-5212
(503) 588-5237 - FAX

www.co.marion.or.us

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Janet Carlson
Samuel Brentano
Patricia Milne

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

John Lattimer

February 13, 2013

Representative Carolyn Tomei, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Tomei:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of House Bill 2392. I also would like to express appreciation to Representative Clem for his help in sponsoring this bill on behalf of Oregon's youth.

As you are aware, counties have been key stakeholders in delivering services for children and youth for the past twenty years. With the passage of House Bill 4165 (2012), the direction shifted from county-based decision making for Oregon's young children to decisions through regional hubs. Counties worked closely with the Governor's Office and legislators to craft language that would assure a smooth transition. Counties are among many entities that have been working hard to make this transition successful. We have embraced the new direction and have, in many cases, been the primary conveners of early learning stakeholders in communities to design the enhanced early learning system.

In contrast, the Youth Development Council was included much later in the 2012 legislative negotiations. House Bill 4165 included a framework for the new council, a few general directives (including prioritizing funding for gangs), and generally shifted youth-related responsibilities from the State Commission on Children and Families to the new state council, but without any local or regional corollary structures. There are policy choices presently being made by the Council and its staff about how funding will be distributed – with limited legislative direction.

House Bill 2392 and the clarifying amendments initiate a legislative discussion about whether the state policy for youth development was adequately articulated. It adds "criminogenic risk factors" to the list of considerations for prioritized funding and asks the Youth Development Council to develop a statewide equitable funding formula, entering into agreements with "regional or county entities" for youth services delivery.

Proponents of House Bill 2392 support the Governor's direction to tie funding to educational outcomes. We further support performance-based contracts and other accountability measures. We are simply concerned that the proposed funding concepts of priority decisions and contracting at the state level with several large nonprofit entities will focus dollars on youth in certain parts of Oregon – and will likely exclude many rural parts of the state. And unlike the early learning system, many proven youth development programs that are supporting youth from Curry to Wallowa counties will be diminished or close on June 30, 2013 without a thoughtful transition plan.

As chairperson of the Association of Oregon Counties Human Services Steering Committee in 2012, I heard these concerns expressed by committee members. Based on those discussions, AOC adopted the following legislative principle:

*Support the early learning transition, specifically:
Legislation and Youth Development Council policies and rules that assure a role for counties in developing the local service delivery system and in continuing proven programs currently distributed through local commissions on children and families.*

AOC has not yet taken a position on House Bill 2392, because the Public Safety Committee did not have time to discuss the bill at the recent meeting. However, the AOC Human Services Steering Committee did take a position in support of the bill last Friday.

I appreciate your consideration of House Bill 2392 and look forward to continued legislative discussion on these important policy issues.

Sincerely,



Janet Carlson



**Association of
Oregon Counties**

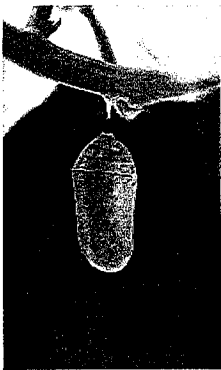
Teammates in Statewide Transformations



PBNJ Productions/Blend Images/
Getty Images

Counties are teammates with the state, providing vital public services to the residents of Oregon. A number of service systems are undergoing transformations. Some of the larger systems are:

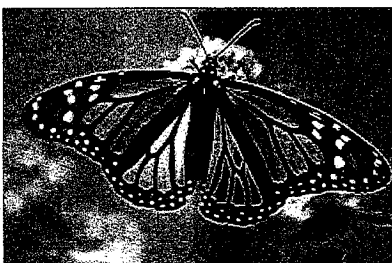
- health care
- natural resources
- budgeting
- public safety
- education
- public finance



Don Farrall/Lifesize/Getty Images

The State of Oregon and her 36 counties are inextricably linked as counties deliver state services at the local level and participate in policy-making at the state level.

- **Health care:** State and federal programming and funding. Services are delivered locally by counties, and counties are statutorily the public and mental health authorities in each county.
- **Natural resources:** The state developed the Integrated Water Resources Strategy; counties are the conveners of the regional planning efforts. Federal land management is an issue at the top of both state and county to-do lists.
- **Budgeting:** The state is working on a 10-year budget plan. County commissioners are members of the executive committee and program funding teams, recognizing that the state and her counties are teammates in delivering services.
- **Public Safety:** The Governor's Commission on Public Safety is looking at all aspects of the public safety system. Counties team up with the state in many ways, including DA funding, Community Corrections and housing of felons sentenced to less than one year (1145).
- **Education:** Counties are heavily involved in the delivery of services through the new Early Learning Council and are linked with the state in delivering juvenile services and youth development programs.
- **Public finance:** The system of public finance in the State of Oregon is in disrepair. Whether we're talking about PERS or broader reforms, counties and the state must work together to establish stable funding for vital public services.



Altrendo Nature/Stockbyte/Getty Images

The state can't do it alone. The counties can't do it alone. But together, as a team, when the transformations are complete the residents of Oregon will have effective and efficient delivery of vital public services.

- Maintain or strengthen the counties' abilities to administer and oversee the delivery of mental health and addictions and public health services within their jurisdictions.
- Support the early learning transition, specifically:
 - Efforts to assure a smooth transition during the period from June 30, 2013 to January 1, 2014 for services currently funded through local commissions on children and families.
 - Legislation and Youth Development Council policies and rules that assure a role for counties in developing the local service delivery system and in continuing proven programs currently distributed through local commissions on children and families.
 - Extend the sunset date for Section 140, House Bill 4165 (2012) from June 30, 2013 to January 1, 2014 or until the local accountability hubs are fully implemented.
 - Affirm Section 77a, House Bill 4165 (2012) and assure that Early Learning Council policies and rules implement the legislative intent. This includes adjusting the date in Section 77b so that Section 77a will not be repealed until all early learning hubs are selected.
- Support mental health services, specifically:
 - Additional funds to sustain behavioral health services at the current service level.
 - Investment of more funds in mental health services to prevent costly institutional care, displacement from families and natural supports, and incarceration.
 - Aligning mental health funding strategies and coverage among all payers.
- Adjust County Veteran Services Officer (CVSO) distribution formula to calculate "aid to counties" under ORS 406.454, resulting in more resources dedicated to CVSO operations.
- Assure that funding for CVSOs will not be negatively impacted by an administrative fee for the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Advocate for a biennial budget that funds necessary services and supports to Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities.
- Support efforts to maintain the Seniors and Disabled Property Tax Deferral Program. Support grandfathering individuals who were previously eligible yet were disqualified due to having reverse mortgages.
- Support the role of counties as the local public health authority as required in ORS 431.416.