



Oregon Office of Rural Health

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Testimony in Favor of HB 2858
Ways & Means Subcommittee on Human Services
June 6, 2013
Robert Duehmig, Oregon Office of Rural Health

Chair Bates, Chair Nathanson and Members of the Committee:

The 2011 Oregon Legislature appropriated \$525,000 to create the Oregon Primary Health Care Loan Forgiveness Program. The program is designed to recruit students that are interested in providing primary health care services in rural Oregon and allows participants to borrow up to \$35,000 per year for their second and subsequent years of their education. Students who apply must be enrolled or intend to enroll in a qualified rural specific Oregon training program. During the first year of the program, OHSU had the only qualified programs - the Oregon Rural Scholars program within the School of Medicine and the Rural Track of the Doctor of Nursing Practice within the School of Nursing. This year, the PA program at Pacific University was included in the program. Students from other institutions that develop programs designed specifically to train primary care providers for rural practice will be able to participate.

The Office of Rural Health definition of a qualified program is:

- Academic designation as a track or program within a school (of med, osteopathy, PA, NP/DNP, dentistry or pharmacy etc)
- Program or track has selective admission based on student criteria and attributes that contribute to likelihood of rural practice selection
- Program or track has curricular elements with rural focus (may include didactics, projects, research) specific to the track or program (in other words, can't be just the same thing that all the students get)
- Program or track connects students to mentoring and career advising with faculty (paid or volunteer) who have rural practice experience and expertise
- At least 10% of required clinical training in the track or program occurs in rural clinical settings

In addition to attending a qualified rural training program, awardees must agree to the following:

- One year of clinical service in an approved rural Oregon practice site is required for the forgiveness of each year of loans granted through this program.
- Service shall begin no later than 90 days following completion of a primary care residency, physician assistant or nurse practitioner training program.
- The participant must provide a minimum of 32 hours/week of clinical practice in an approved rural Oregon site.
- Eligible practice sites will be located in a rural federally designated HPSA or MUA, or Area of Unmet Healthcare Need as designated by the Oregon Office of Rural Health.

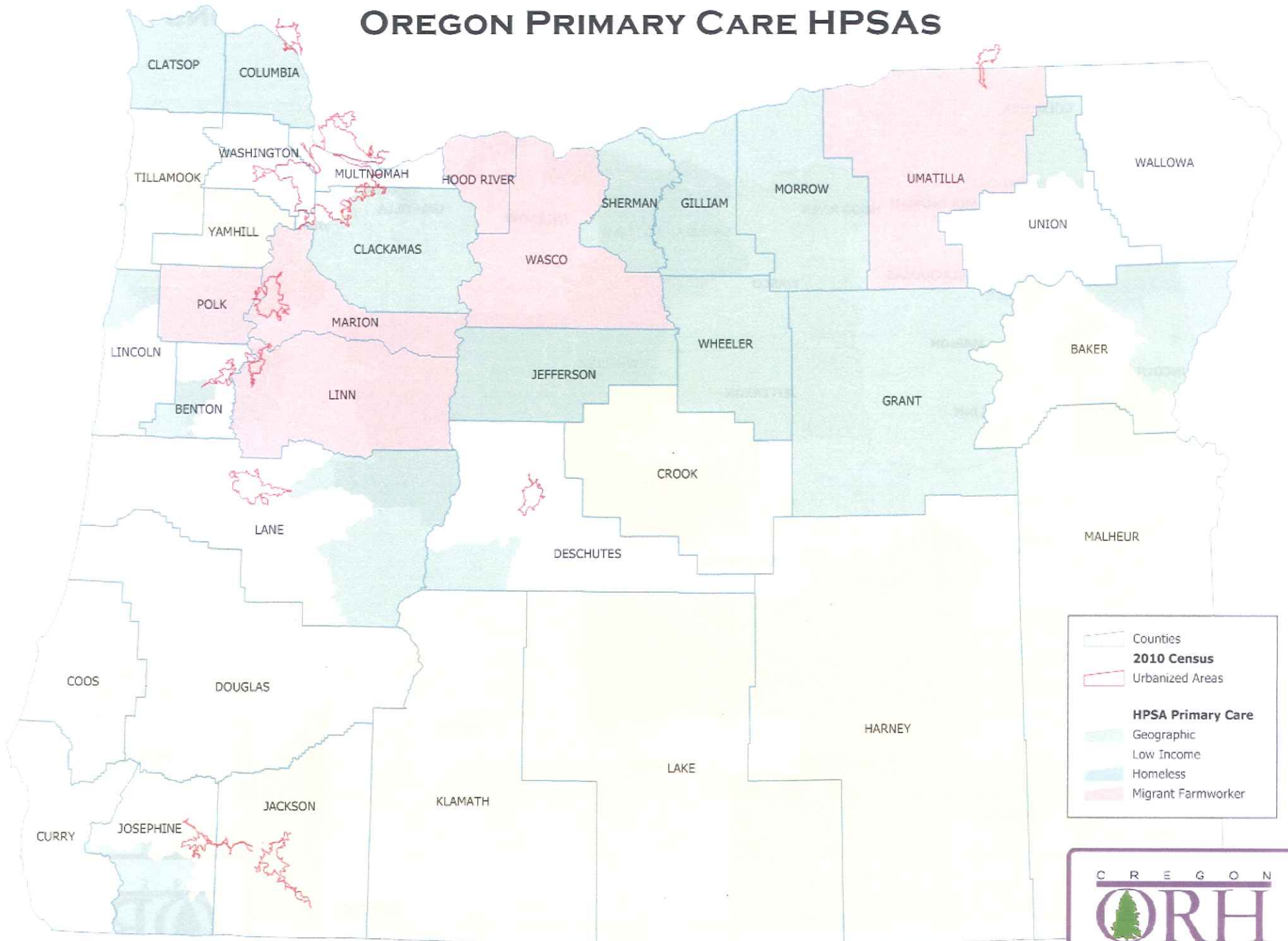
During the first year of the loan forgiveness program, loans were awarded to five students: four medical students and one Doctor of Nursing student. Of the original awardees, one will be leaving the program to begin his/her residency and one will leave to begin his/her practice.

The 2013 cycle of awards was just completed and loans were awarded to five students: four medical students and one PA. The PA is the first to be awarded from Pacific University. Additionally, continuation awards were given to three students from the previous cycle.

HB 2858 would fund the Primary Health Care Loan Forgiveness Program at \$1m for the next biennia. This would fund an estimated 14 loans of \$35,000 each year over the period of two to three years. It will also give the necessary funds to the the Office of Rural Health to administer this program. Administrative functions include the application process, the review and award process as well as the long-term follow-up with students to ensure they return to Oregon and complete their practice obligation.

Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you might have.

OREGON PRIMARY CARE HPSAS



Counties
 2010 Census Urbanized Areas
 HPSA Primary Care Geographic
 Low Income
 Homeless
 Migrant Farmworker



2011 OREGON RURAL UNMET HEALTHCARE NEED BY SERVICE AREA

