



**Washington County
Commission on Children and Families**

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES

Testimony on SB 436 - February 21, 2013

William Thomas, Director, Washington County Commission on Children and Families

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is William Thomas and I live in Senate District 22 in Portland. I serve as Director of the Washington County Commission on Children and Families, which is located within our Department of Health and Human Services. I am testifying in support of SB 436.

SB 436, with the proposed amendments, would establish legislative direction for Coordinated Care Organizations to work within the structure of their community needs assessments, and to include within their transformation plans a strategy and a road map for working with school-based health centers. This directive would help coordinate the effective and efficient delivery of care in communities throughout Oregon, as well as provide a needed bridge between reform efforts in health care and education that are proceeding on parallel tracks with little coordination.

In Washington County we have seen the concrete results that occur when education and health care are better aligned. In 2006, our Commission surveyed all of our 105 schools and found that principals across the county saw lack of access to health care as an increasing barrier to academic success for the 85,000 students in Washington County's seven school districts. In response, we organized the Washington County School-Based Health Center (SBHC) Initiative. This effort has become a cross-system collaboration of more than 25 organizations representing education, healthcare, higher education, mental health and other key community partners, including our two community health centers, all four hospital systems and most recently Health Share of Oregon.

Over the past seven years our Initiative has opened two SBHCs at Tigard High and Forest Grove High, and on March 15 is opening a third new SBHC at Century High in Hillsboro. During this period, our collaborative partners have leveraged over \$5.5 million in public and private funding from 15 different federal, state and local sources, including three \$500,000 federal construction grants. In addition to the new Century SBHC, these grants enable us to construct new SBHCs at Beaverton High, opening in March 2014 and at Tualatin High, opening during FY 2014-15. At that point, children and youth in all seven school districts will have access to an SBHC offering health promotion and prevention and integrated primary care, mental health and dental services.

This effort has demonstrated identifiable and measurable impacts not only in outcomes for the thousands of children and youth who have received high-quality healthcare services, but also in terms of return on investment and value added to our communities. We could not have done this without the collaboration and alignment that SB 436 has the potential to bring to the entire state. Our Commission urges the Committee to adopt amendments being submitted by Senator Steiner Hayward, and to send SB 436 to the Senate floor with a Do Pass recommendation. Thank you.

School-Based Health Center Partnership Model

July 20, 2012

