

SB 213: Early Learning Hubs

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

March 13, 2015

Chair Sara Gelser, Vice Chair Olsen and Members of the Committee:

As co-chairs of the Early Learning Hub serving Lincoln, Benton and Linn counties, we are pleased to submit this letter of support for SB 213 on behalf of our Board of Directors.

In our roles as Hub co-chairs -- and as current and former local elected officials -- we have seen the value and effectiveness of regional collaboration such as that envisioned with the Early Learning Hub and SB 213.

Julie Manning, former Corvallis Mayor and a long-time executive with Samaritan Health Services, represents the region's Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO) on the Hub board, and Lincoln County Commissioner Bill Hall is also a member of the IHN-CCO board. In addition, Julie and Bill have each served as board members of the region's Council of Governments (Cascades West), and Bill serves on the board of the region's Community Action Agency (Community Services Consortium). As Mayor, Julie served on the advisory committee for the state's Regional Solutions effort in the Southern Willamette Valley that formulated the concept for RAIN (Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network), which is forging a highly successful regional partnership for economic development.

In each of these instances, we have seen first-hand how regional collaboration helps to foster innovative thinking, leverage the area's unique resources and develop more comprehensive and thoughtful solutions than any one entity could achieve on its own. In bringing the various partners to the table together, we can each learn from one another and help ensure that we are solving problems in a way that "raises all boats" and is not redundant or duplicative of services already being provided within the region. It also goes without saying that this type of work is often more cost effective and elicits greater buy-in among the participating organizations and individuals. Additionally, the agreed-up solutions benefit from the leveraged communication tools available by enlisting all the participants (and their respective constituencies) in that important process. Again, this also saves valuable resources.

Because of Oregon's existing regional efforts such as CCOs and Regional Solutions, we have become increasingly knowledgeable about the benefits of this approach, and increasingly comfortable working together as regions. New relationships are being formed, trust is building, and our respective communities are benefiting as a result.

We have every reason to believe that making our regional Early Learning Hubs permanent through SB 213 will show equally positive results. We encourage your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Bill Hall
Hub Co-Chair
Lincoln County Commissioner



Julie Manning
Hub Co-Chair
Vice President, Samaritan Health Services