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Oregon Chapter, American College of Emergency Physicians (O.C.E.P)

— Statement for the Record to the House Judiciary Committee

March 19, 2015

HB 2936 Immunity for Sobering Centers

Chair Barker and members of the committee, my name is Katy King and this statement is submitted on behalf of OCEP, the Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians. OCEP is a medical society that has represented physicians specializing in emergency medicine since 1971 and its members share a commitment to improve emergency healthcare for all Oregonians.

OCEP supports House Bill 2936. This bill establishes extends civil and criminal immunity to sobering facilities, for actions taken in good faith. These centers provide a safe and supportive environment for people who are publicly intoxicated or alcohol dependent. They also decrease the number of ED visits for alcohol dependent individuals and create an alternative to booking individuals arrested for public intoxication.

The American College of Emergency Physicians estimate that anywhere from 1 - 5 percent of ED visits are alcohol-related. Facilities such as The Grants Pass Sobering Center based and the Hooper Detoxification Stabilization Center based in Portland, Oregon, offer several thousand people a year medical care and referral to ongoing treatment services.

In summary, OCEP supports policies that encourage treatment for people who are suffering from alcohol overdose. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.