

## AFSCME testimony on HB 5526, Public Health Budget

Dear Co-chairs and members of the committee,

Thank you, for the opportunity to testify on the Public Health portion of the OHA budget, SB 553=26. My name is Eva Rippeteau. I am a political coordinator for Oregon AFSCME Council 75. AFSCME represents local public health employees in several counties around the state. Local Public Health staff play an important role in improving the health of everyone in Oregon. They are responsible for helping new moms with WIC, inspecting our restaurants and helping protect all in Oregon against the spread of disease, just to list a few things.

Last year, I served on the Future of Public Health Task Force. One of the recommendations in our report was that “Significant and sustained state funding for the governmental public health system be identified and allocated for proper operationalization of the Foundational Capabilities and Programs.” The Task Force spent quite a bit of time reviewing public health budget information and acknowledged an investment would be needed to move the dial on the Health of Oregonians.

As you have likely heard from others, the Trust for America’s Health ranks Oregon 46<sup>th</sup> in per capita spending on public health services. To modernize our public health system through implementation of HB 3100 (should it pass), we need to make sure that we make significant investments to support that work. Investments should include additional funds to address recent reductions in public health. These funds are needed to support communicable disease prevention, investigation and control.

The Governor’s budget invests \$500,000 in the Public Health Division to start the planning work on implementing the new Framework for public health. However, the public health system will need investments beyond that \$500,000 to implement the new framework in future sessions. As we modernize our public health system we are going to need to invest in local public health based on the needs and availability of services in communities. Oregon AFSCME asks that you make these much needed investments in public health.

Thank you, for your time.