



To	Chair Barker and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
From	Joanne Fuller, Director, Multnomah County Health Department
Date	February 9, 2016
Subject	HB 4116 Testimony

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony about HB 4116. This bill has the potential to provide a venue for stakeholders to discuss how best to provide high quality care for a vulnerable part of our community, inmates in county jail facilities.

Multnomah County provides health care services to over 38,000 inmates each year in its two adult jails and one juvenile detention facility. Approximately one in three inmates require mental health treatment or medication. Many inmates face addiction to alcohol and drugs. Inmates also face similar health challenges to the general population, like diabetes and hypertension.

We employ physicians, psychiatrists, nurses and dental providers to care for inmates. Additionally we regularly provide health care and lodging for high cost, high needs inmates from other Oregon counties. Since HB 4116 will consider the costs of inmate health care services, it is important for Multnomah County to offer a clarification on page 2, line 4, where the bill states one of the goals for the Task Force: "Make more efficient the use of state funds for inmate health care services."

In Multnomah County, nearly all of our health care service programming is funded through Multnomah County General Fund rather than through state funds. Only in recent years have we received our first state grant to fund jail diversion activities through an Oregon Health Authority grant. Multnomah County supports increased state investment in health services for jail inmates, but the reality today is that most of our jail health services are funded via county funds, grants, nominal inmate fees and other outside sources.

We look forward to the legislature's commitment to assuring high quality health care for all Oregonians. Multnomah County would be pleased at the opportunity to participate in the Task Force on County Jail Inmate Health Care Coverage in the coming years. We would have much to contribute to the conversation. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have questions, please contact Sami Jarrah, Deputy Director for Integrated Clinical Services, at 503-988-4826 or sami.jarrah@multco.us.