

JIM WEIDNER
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 24



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
900 COURT ST NE
SALEM, OR 97301

HB 4116-1
House Committee on Judiciary
February 9th, 2016

Dear Chair Barker and distinguished members of the House Committee on Judiciary. My name is Representative Jim Weidner from House District #24 which encompasses parts of Yamhill and Washington County.

I would like to begin by thanking you for this public hearing and for considering referring this to the Joint Committee of Ways & Means with your full support. This bill, HB 4116, works to bring together the stakeholders who can collectively create solutions for our county jails by streamlining government agency cooperation so Oregon can provide better healthcare coverage while reducing the burden of healthcare costs placed upon the budget of the county sheriff's office. This work group will be tasked to create legislative proposals for the 2017 Legislative Assembly.

The -1 amendment was a simple fix to change the method of organization from that of a task force, to a proposed work group. In addition, two additional members have been added to represent both the rural and urban hospitals and the selection process for the Circuit Court Judge was changed from appointment by the Governor to appointment by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

We have worked diligently with the many organizations and state agencies being selected for membership on this work group in the drafting of this bill. The genesis of this concept began with conversations with our Yamhill County Sheriff Tim Svenson. We understood the drastic swing in budgetary responsibilities for inmate healthcare from year to year and the difficulty for sheriff's offices to predict future healthcare needs. These conversations soon opened up to a larger conversation about access to healthcare for Oregon's inmates and the need for better cooperation between government agencies in providing care and cost effective solutions.

Again, I would like to thank you for taking the time to hear this important issue today and we ask for your support.

Sincerely,