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Representative Julie Fahey
900 Court ST NE, H-474
Salem, OR 97301

March 6, 2017

Dear Julie,

I am dismayed that the legislature is possibly closing Junction City Psychiatric Hospital. This hospital has been a godsend for our family. My son is currently staying at the Junction City under a Guilty Except for Insanity verdict after he assaulted my husband on 11/24/15. He has been in the hospital since mid July of 2016, and has made great strides in his mental status. Before his hospitalization he did not accept that he had mental illness.

However, since being at Junction City, he accepts his diagnosis and is willing to submit for treatment, including medication and classroom attendance. He has worked towards privileges that allow work as a dishwasher, walks on the hospital grounds, and a few outings in the community. Our son, as well as our family, have much higher expectations for his future due to the compassionate and educational treatment he has received. We are hopeful that he will be allowed to move into supervised housing near the end of this calendar year.

Moreover, I am afraid for our community at large if the hospital was closed. Where would these individuals be housed? Would many of them end up on the streets to join other homeless individuals who struggle with mental illness? The homeless community in the Eugene/Springfield area is already being pressed from all sides. Many people with mental illness end up in Lane County Jail, which is not a valid treatment option. Our son spent time in the jail before he was moved, and his mental status suffered greatly, often feeling suicidal.

Please be judicious in your decision making! It makes no sense to close a beautiful facility that is helpful for many and offers employment for others. If anything, expand the use of the building to house others or be used for other types of treatment. Our family is grateful for your consideration, wisdom, and compassion in this difficult decision.

Sincerely,

LuAnn K. Wu