

From: Linda Willow
To: [JWMHS Exhibits](#)
Subject: Do not close State Hospital
Date: Wednesday, March 08, 2017 9:43:52 AM

To Honorable Rep. Fahey, Senator Manning and the Joint Ways and Means Committee on Human Services:

This message is to share my intense concern about the proposal to close the State Psychiatric Hospital in Junction City. The mentally ill are so often among the first to lose funding during budget shortfalls, which is deeply wrong to begin with, as these people have even less advocacy than other vulnerable and disenfranchised people. In this case, the entire community is at risk. I have worked in mental health over 20 years and know a bit about this topic.

This hospital houses those who are truly dangerous; I saw a legislator on the news saying something like "they'll be fine going into community housing and other situations." NOT TRUE! In the past I've worked in such housing where client's dangerous behaviors are NOT controlled the way they are in such a facility, and in such housing placements, being hurt/assaulted by these patients was a regular occurrence. I and others have suffered trauma from these experiences! Things are so liberal right now that it takes an overwhelming amount of effort for concerned families to be able to place their loved ones on commitment in a facility like this.

These patients are the most concerning (often criminally) mentally ill people who have seriously hurt others, set houses on fire due to their delusions, shot guns at unseen enemies and the like. They need safe, secure settings like this. And all this is not to mention that Oregon spent 80 million to create this safe haven, and now wants to close it a YEAR after opening? Again, the disenfranchised (mentally ill) will get the shaft, but in this case, so will the family members, neighbors, mental health workers and other citizens who are assaulted or worse when these people are dumped to settings that cannot contain extreme behaviors. I say all this as an Oregon Qualified Mental Health Professional with experience working with the seriously mentally ill in 3 different states. Please find other ways to balance the budget that pose less risk to the vulnerable and to the community.

Thank you for your consideration,

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Health Professional
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