

Re: HB 2751

March 9, 2017

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to request support for loan repayment for occupational therapists in rural critical access areas.

I am writing on behalf of two family medicine physicians that practice at Winding Waters Medical Clinic and Wallowa Memorial Hospital in NE Oregon. We practice inpatient and outpatient medicine. We consider ourselves incredibly lucky to be working in a hospital system that employs an occupational therapist.

Our occupational therapist plays a critical role in both inpatient and outpatient realms of medicine.

In the inpatient setting, our occupational therapist is a part of our multidisciplinary rounds every day. She is essential in helping us determine cognitive status in the hospital and evaluating readiness for discharge.

As many rural counties in Oregon, we have a large geriatric population. Given our rural location, we do not have any nursing homes in our county. Many of our elderly live at home and have very few options for assisted living or intermediate levels of care. Our occupational therapist is able to do home visits and perform home safety evaluations. She provides in depth reports on home conditions and ability to perform activities of daily living. Her information gives us great confidence in our discharge plans, reduces readmission, and helps keep our patients out of the ER.

We are able to target high risk patients and have our occupational therapist do similar evaluations in the outpatient setting.

We would be very disappointed to see any loss of funding or support that helps occupational therapists work and serve in rural communities in Oregon. Our occupational therapist has quickly become an integral part of our multidisciplinary health care delivery team. We would not want to work in a hospital without an occupational therapist!

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annika Maly, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Drs. Geoff and Annika Maly

Winding Waters Medical Clinic
603 Medical Parkway
Enterprise, OR 97828
annika.maly@windingwaters.org
geoff.maly@windingwaters.org