



CROOK COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
"A Healthy and Safe Future for the People of Crook County"

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House Committee on Health Care
Support House Bill 2310 – Implementing Public Health Modernization

Oregon's 34 local public health departments focus on protecting children and families by preparing for, preventing and responding to illnesses and injuries caused by a variety of factors. We are submitting this letter to support HB 2310 and funding to implement the first phase of Public Health Modernization

Crook County Health & Human Services supports HB 2310 with an amendment that will include the recommendations for 2017-19 implementation made by the Public Health Advisory Board to implement aspects of the Communicable Disease and Environmental Health Foundational Programs and Assessment and Epidemiology, Leadership and Health Equity Foundation Capabilities. These areas build off of current capacity with a focus to greater accountability to improving health outcomes.

To do this, Oregon's public health system needs funding, we simply cannot afford to leave our public health departments underfunded and without adequate public health infrastructure until a horrific epidemic, disaster or outbreak occurs. Supporting public health will ensure fair opportunities for health and eliminate gaps in health outcomes, slow the spread of Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Syphilis and other communicable diseases, improve childhood immunization rates, and increase community capacity to identify, and respond, to environmental health hazards.

Redefining and expanding the work and expectations of public health can help improve the conditions that create opportunities for health. A well supported health department is critical to the health of our community. For example in Crook County, adult tobacco use rates are 31% (2010-2013) compared to 19% for all other counties. Public Health Modernization would help support Crook County's work to address high rates of tobacco use, and work with partners to address other public health issues like diabetes and heart disease. The department has been working with partners on environmental health work such as built environment, but we lack the capacity to fully engage without funding and support. The modernization work provides the support to expand this work and be a leader in the community to improve health and save costs.

The work of Oregon's local public health departments is essential to the health of communities across our state. Crook County Health & Human Services urges your support of house bill 2310.

Sincerely,

Muriel DeLaVergne-Brown, RN, MPH
Director, Crook County Health & Human Services