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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Lincoln County
Maternal Child Health

April 4, 2017

Subject: Support House Bill 2310 – Implementing Public Health Modernization

House Committee on Health Care,

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

Lincoln County Public Health 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 foundational 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. In Lincoln County our sexually transmitted infections have nearly doubled while outbreaks of Norovirus in our schools and Long-term Care facilities are common place. We hope with new funding we can get out ahead of these outbreaks to prevent them and create a healthier community and save money for the health care industry.

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

Sincerely,

Rebecca Austen

Lincoln County Public Health Director

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