



June 28, 2017
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Human Services
Testimony in Support of HB 2310A

Good Morning Co-Chairs Steiner Hayward and Rayfield:

My name is Tricia Mortell and I am the Public Health Manager at Washington County Department of Health and Human Services. I am here today testifying on behalf of the Coalition of Local Health Officials in support of HB 2310A and the \$5 million in the Oregon Health Authority budget allocated to fund step one of Public Health Modernization.

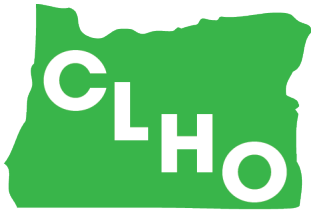
Since the passage of HB 3100 (2015) state and local health officials have been planning for the implementation of public health modernization across the Public Health System. A comprehensive statewide assessment found that to fully implement the public health work outlined in HB 3100, it would cost \$105 million per year. Receiving the state funding to fully implement this system change will take multiple sessions.

In conversations between the Public Health Division and the Coalition of Local Health Officials leadership, Communicable Disease Prevention and Control was identified as the area of greatest importance and where additional resources are needed. The re-emergence of disease like measles and the overwhelming increases of sexually transmitted disease across the state are only two reminders of how important local public health departments are for preventing and responding to communicable diseases in every Oregon community. Some more concrete reminders of the importance of modernizing and investing in our public health system include:

- In the past 10 years rates of syphilis have increased by 1500%.
- Chlamydia is the most common reportable illness in Oregon. Reported rates of chlamydia are twice as high in women as in men
- Oregon state and local health departments investigated 291 acute and communicable disease outbreaks in 2015, up from 256 in 2014 (a 14% increase)
- Between 2016 and 2017, 47 cases of mumps, a highly contagious infectious disease, were reported in Oregon
- As these rates of communicable diseases are increasing, local public health has either seen flat or reduced funding. We are scrambling at the local level to find any resources we can to pour into our prevention and protection efforts related to communicable diseases.

For more information please contact Morgan Cowling, Executive Director
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COALITION OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

In Washington County one communicable disease that is continually outpacing our ability to keep up with is tuberculosis. We usually have about 15 cases to investigate and manage a year, and only half way through this year we already have 18 cases. We receive \$46,540 annually to deal with TB but it is costing our county over \$600,000 annually just for the personnel needed to manage this disease.

\$5 million investment will begin to drive the implementation of state and local Public Health Modernization and focus on Communicable Disease prevention. Although this investment is not enough to fully implement Public Health Modernization in all communities throughout Oregon, it is an important first step.

I'd be happy to answer any questions.
Thank you.



Public Health

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