

June 22, 2020

Joint Interim Committee On The First Special Session of 2020
Oregon Legislature

**Subject: AOC Testimony in Support of Health & Human Services Related Provisions
Contained in LC 45 and LC 52 (2020 First Special Session)**

Dear Co-Chair Courtney, Co-Chair Kotek, Co-Vice Chair Girod, and Co-Vice Chair Drazan, and
Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on important legislation related to our state's response to the COVID-19 crisis. We believe this pandemic has and will continue to exacerbate pre-existing challenges faced by many constituents in our counties. Specifically we are concerned about the growing lack of housing affordability and homelessness, impacts of poverty, and disparate health access.

AOC strongly supports the following provisions of LC 45.

1. Emergency Shelter Supersiting

This portion of LC 45 is the same language contained in HB 4001 which AOC was pleased to support in the 2020 Short Session. We believe that this emergency siting tool will be important for both COVID related housing issues and seasonal winter shelter capacity needs. We hope to help improve the concept by addressing a concern related to vehicle camping --- specifically, that landowners should be required to return sites to pre-camping condition within 90 days after the end of the emergency period.

2. Low Income Energy Assistance

This is an important opportunity to help the state allocate any new federal dollars to an existing program administered by Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS).

3. Race and Ethnicity Data Collection

AOC is committed to taking action steps to reduce racial and ethnic disparity in access to health care and other human services. We strongly support the new data collection requirements (placed on health care providers) outlined in LC 45 as a critical first step to enable our collective state-county partnership to be held more accountable. AOC does have a concern however that this provision is an unfunded mandate and that the state should identify and allocate funds to ensure this data collection effort can be achieved and sustained. Race and ethnicity data collection efforts to accurately measure the true level of disparities in healthcare and other human services will require additional state financial support and technical assistance leadership.

4. Immunity for Isolation Shelters

AOC supports the Immunity for Isolation/Shelters provision of LC 45 to ensure we can adequately respond to the growing needs for safe, non-congregate shelter capacity during the COVID crisis. Along with our other supportive partners LOC, the Governor's Office, and the

Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association (ORLA), AOC has been part of the Turnkey Partnership to work on this issue as part of a broader effort help develop non-congregate housing by using hotels and motels that can be funded with FEMA and CARES monies for both immediate and long-term housing strategies.

5. LC 52 Healthcare Equity for People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

AOC supports the provision of LC 52 to help address the growing disparities in healthcare access and treatment faced by people with intellectual/developmental disabilities who: may lack or not be able to communicate via advance directives or similar healthcare instructions; who may need to have at least one support person present during a hospital stay; and/or who have been denied or restricted access to medical resources simply because of their disability.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be part of this important Special Session and our state's effort to meet the needs of all Oregonians during this unique time.

Andrew J. Smith
Association of Oregon Counties
Health & Human Services Policy Manager