

June 24, 2020

Joint Committee On The First Special Session of 2020
Oregon Legislature

**Subject: AOC Testimony in Support of Health & Human Services Related Provisions
Contained in HB 4212 (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 HB 4212:

1. We support Immunity for Isolation Shelters.

This time limited provision will help ensure that Oregon 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.

2. We support the Emergency Shelter Supersiting provision

This portion of the bill mirrors language contained in HB 4001 which AOC supported 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.

3. We support the Low Income Energy Assistance provision

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).

**4. We support the Race and Ethnicity Data Collection provision; however, we believe this
may be an unfunded mandate and that the state should appropriate funding for this
important work.**

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 HB 4212 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 may be 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.

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. J. Smith', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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