



## Legislative Testimony

### OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

March 15, 2021

The Honorable Anna Williams, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

#### **RE: House Bill 2348**

Chair Williams and members of the committee, I am Rob Persson, Assistant Director of the Operations Division for the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC). I am providing written testimony on the current practices for providing meat-alternative diets within the department.

#### **What the Bill Does:**

HB 2348 requires hospitals and long-term care facilities to make plant-based meals and beverages available to patients, residents, staff, and visitors. The bill prohibits hospitals from offering processed meats. It also requires DOC to make 100 percent plant-based meals available to adults in custody (AICs) any time meals are served.

#### **Background Information:**

DOC currently offers a meat alternative tray (MAT) as an additional meal option to mainline meals. This option is available to AICs who choose not to consume meat for personal or dietary preferences. It is offered at lunch and dinner meals. Some institutions may require AICs to sign up in advance.

A meat-free breakfast substitution is also available. The meal is essentially the same as a mainline meal, but with the meat item replaced with peanut butter. Both the MAT and non-meat breakfast substitutions are also made available to individuals in special housing.

The MAT is low in fat, sodium, and sugar and provides more fiber than mainline meals. The MAT may include animal byproducts such as eggs and dairy. AICs can select this tray instead of the regular mainline items or opt for an 8 oz. bowl of beans in place of the main entrée in a regular meal.

The MAT consists of a variety of fresh vegetables, cooked vegetables, steamed brown or white rice, and a variety of simmered beans. Along with these items, individuals can add items from the mainline meal such as bread and margarine as well as the salad of the day. Fresh fruit is also served on the MAT when available in mainline meals.

Each MAT meal provides an average of 35 grams of protein and approximately 800 to 1,100 calories per meal, similar to what a mainline meal provides. A soft version is also available, if ordered by a physician.

This bill will restrict DOC from using animal byproducts thereby removing eggs, milk products, and honey. It will also limit recipe items normally purchased in bulk. Bulk purchasing results in cost reduction. These changes can be addressed but will result in an additional expense for DOC.

Removing eggs will be a big shift for DOC. Eggs are often served at breakfast and not substituted; only meat is substituted. This change will also preclude DOC from serving mayonnaise-based salads on the MAT, which will result in serving an alternative, such as green salads and fresh vegetables, which is more expensive

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

*Submitted by:*

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