



March 26, 2021

Chair Prusak, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Salinas, Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Stacy Michaelson, and I represent the six school districts in East Multnomah County, which includes: Centennial, Corbett, David Douglas, Gresham-Barlow, Parkrose, and Reynolds. I also represent Multnomah Education Service District.

I write today in support of HB 2591. Currently four of the districts I represent have a School-Based Health Center: Centennial, David Douglas, Parkrose, and Reynolds, which just had its virtual grand opening in January of this year. Had mobile health centers been allowed just two years ago, I likely would be bragging today about our two new SBHCs in East County, not just one.

In 2019, Gresham-Barlow was working with a local medical clinic to get a SBHC as well. Unfortunately, as they came to the end of their planning period, the district was still sorting through final details regarding the location of the facility and the funding. Working collaboratively with their potential medical sponsor, the district developed an interim plan to open a mobile health center provided by the clinic. This would have bought the district the necessary time to select the final location and to secure capital for construction. All parties thought this was an excellent solution. However, OHA denied the request to use a mobile health center, even on a short-term basis.

Passing HB 2591 will give districts greater flexibility in establishing school-based health centers. This flexibility is greatly appreciated when coordinating among multiple partners and navigating capital raising and construction. It also allows partners to be creative in how they try to meet the needs of their local communities.

As others have mentioned, mobile health clinics may be the best long-term solution for some districts. Even in our urban area, there was talk of the benefits of having a SBHC that could travel between the schools in Gresham-Barlow to meet students and families where they are. This is likely doubly true in districts where it may be a 40 mile drive between schools.

With the goal of expanding access to school-based health centers for all students and communities who need them, I strongly urge your passage of HB 2591. Thank you.