



**Joint Letter of Support for the Umatilla County Jail**  
*from the Offices of Senator Hansell, SD 29 and Representative Levy, HD 58*

Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and members of the Subcommittee on Capital Construction,

The Umatilla County Jail serves as a regional facility for all of Eastern Oregon. It is no surprise that as a state, we are dealing with increased issues and obstacles surrounding our ability and capacity to deal with mental health. Through the passage of Measure 11, the issues we're facing have increased Umatilla County's critical need for mental health infrastructure. Through this project, the Umatilla County Jail will be able to serve the counties needs for individuals to access mental health care services, without the lengthy process of pursuing an entirely new structure. Because our need is critical, this project would serve as the most efficient use of funds and serve the entire region.

As the state continues to disinvest in mental health resources and facilities, law enforcement agencies, especially in rural Oregon, are sometimes the only agencies equipped to help Oregonians in distress. Pendleton, which is home to the Eastern Oregon Detox Center, has seen increased rates of drug, alcohol, and mental health crises. These crises have put such a strain on our local law enforcement that they no longer have the room to provide safe spaces for those charged with a crime, or just waiting for their drugs to wear off. Without robust funds put towards drug, alcohol, and mental health facilities, we are left with few options to address our needs. This project is critical and necessary until we are ready to fully fund crisis centers in Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration of this project,

Senator Bill Hansell, SD 29

Representative Bobby Levy, HD 58

