

February 21, 2021

House Behavioral Health Committee
900 Court St. NE, Rm. 453
State Capitol
Salem, OR, 97301

Dear Members of the House Behavioral Health Committee,

I was gratified to learn of HB 2417 which, if passed, will help communities develop mobile crisis intervention programs. These programs will be based on the highly successful CAHOOTS model based in Eugene. Although I support our local police, I recognize that there are many times police are not equipped to effectively respond to crises related to mental health, substance abuse or homelessness. Mobile crisis response teams have the potential to save money and provide a more effective, trauma-informed intervention in these cases.

As a friend of a mentally ill man, I've had first and second-hand experience of situations where a mobile crisis support team might have handled a situation more appropriately than the police have done. I know of several times when the presence of a uniformed police officer caused my friend's behavior to escalate. I believe that in situations when he becomes loud and unruly, a friendly crisis intervention worker, trained in mental illness, would have more positive results in "keeping the peace" and providing the services my friend needs.

For the sake of our communities, I urge you to vote YES on HB 2417.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Ellen Craine
Ashland, Oregon 97520