



February 16, 2023

TO: Chair Prozanski, members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
FROM: Association of Oregon Counties Legislative Affairs Manager, Jessica Pratt  
RE: Support SB 470

Dear Chair Prozanski,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Counties, representing Oregon's county governments, I am writing to you today to urge your support for Senate Bill 470 to provide health care coverage to youth under the age of 19 in pre-adjudication detention. This is an issue that AOC has been advocating for many years here in Salem and in Washington, D.C. through the National Association of Counties.

Current federal law does not differentiate a person convicted of a crime from a person incarcerated prior to conviction, and as a result, many of those awaiting trial are left without the continuity of their federal health benefits. 'Innocent until proven guilty' applies to all under the Constitution, and therefore, all individuals under the criminal justice system's purview.

Individuals awaiting trial are owed their full set of rights, including access to their human and civil rights, and without limits to their federal health benefits. We also know that thousands of youths awaiting trial in detention across the country have been impacted by losing access to CHIP benefits -- a key tool for keeping low-income kids safe and healthy.

Stable access to care allows for better coordination of health care services, improved health outcomes, lowering short-term costs to local jails and taxpayers and long-term costs to the federal government. AOC supports state and federal efforts to provide health care to those awaiting trial, including youth, adults, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.

Thank you for your partnership to ensure the wellbeing of our youth in pre-adjudication detention.

Jessica Pratt  
Legislative Affairs Manager  
Association of Oregon Counties