



SO Health-E

Advocating for Health Equity

March 1st, 2023

Re: Support for HB 2918 and HB 2925

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Nelson and Goodwin, and Members of the Committee:

SO Health-E, the Regional Health Equity Coalition (RHEC) serving Jackson and Josephine Counties, respectfully requests your yes votes on House Bills 2918 and 2925.

SO Health-E participated in the statewide taskforce that brought Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis bill (HB 2337) to the legislature in 2021. We were glad to see the declaration pass that year as House Resolution 6, and remained committed to completing the work laid out in HB 2337. This meant coming back to the legislature in 2022 to pass the concrete long and short-term strategies to improve health outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Oregonians. We applaud the passage of HB 4052 by legislators in 2022, which did just that.

Systemic racism has been creating preventable health disparities in Oregon since the first European settlers began arriving in 1811, more than 200 years of intergenerational harm. It will take deep and sustained policy work and investments to address this legacy of harm that continues to this day, and to work with BIPOC communities to create effective and responsive health care systems to meet the needs of diverse people of color across Oregon and achieve health equity for all residents.

This year, we are asking for legislative leadership to continue its commitment to important and ongoing work by passing HB 2918 and HB 2925. These bills are necessary for achieving the intent of HB 4052. HB 2918 will extend the timeline for the Oregon affinity groups and community-based organizations to do the necessary planning to implement effective strategies to reach the goals set out by HB 4052, and HB 2925 will provide the needed investment for the mobile health pilot program created by the legislature through HB 4052.

We urge strong support for HB 2918 and HB 2925, and respectfully request that they both be passed out of committee as soon as possible with a “do pass” recommendation.

Thank you for your service on the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare.

Sincerely,

Michelle Glass, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, SO Health-E
SO Health-E, the Regional Health Equity Coalition serving Jackson and Josephine Counties