

Submitter: Amy Geoffroy

On Behalf
Of: FACT Oregon

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human
Services

Measure: SB5525

March 21, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and Members of the Committee:?

My name is Amy Geoffroy, Director of Development, Evaluation and Impact at FACT Oregon, a family-led nonprofit that works toward a future where communities are accessible to, inclusive of, and empower the self-determination of, people with disabilities. I write in support of SB 5525, particularly POP 406.

If the state is to meet Oregon Health Authority's goal of eliminating health inequities by 2030, then increased investment in our public health system must be made. This bill presents a key opportunity to uplift the health of all Oregonians by sufficiently funding our public health system to rectify years of underinvestment and injustice. This investment is especially critical to support the community-based organizations that serve as a bridge to resources for many communities impacted by health inequities. CBOs are in a unique position to support the public health system as we have the trust of our community members and can help give key insights and potential effective solutions.

FACT Oregon has been honored to serve as one of OHA's CBO partners, doing equity work in Adolescent and School Health. Specifically, we provide trainings and 1:1 support to families of youth with disabilities to combat ableism, promote access to health and sexual health education, address learning loss and behavior support needs exacerbated by COVID-19, help youth advocate for their own health and education needs within school systems, and train families to engage in disability-focused education and health equity work.

FACT Oregon is part of the Community Health Equity Coalition, representing more than 80 CBOs providing a wide range of culturally and linguistically responsive services to 500,000+ Oregonians across communities of color, tribal communities, disability communities, rural communities, and communities at the intersections of other identities experience greater health inequities. As integral partners in the public health systems, the CBOs in this coalition work to ensure that public health serves those who experience greater health risks, and we are trusted to provide local, culturally specific, and linguistically responsive services to eliminate health inequities.

POP 406 will be instrumental in modernizing Oregon's public health system to one that is rooted in community and equity centered. We urge you to support OHA's full request of \$286 million, including \$100 million to support the work of CBOs.

Amy Geoffroy, FACT Oregon