



# BRIDGES *to change*

To: Members of the Senate Health Care Committee  
From: Monta Knudson, Executive Director, Bridges to Change  
Date: March 20, 2023  
Re: SB 1044

To whom it may concern,

I write to you as the executive director of Bridges to Change, a non-profit organization that provides substance use and mental health treatment, transitional and permanent housing, and mentoring services for individuals in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.

Bridges to Change supports SB 1044 as continuation of work done in 2022 with HB 4004, a much needed but not adequate emergency investment in the critical needs for behavioral health workforce. While our organization was able to make critical expansions using the investments provided by HB 4004 we remain in need of additional support to ensure that those investments remain in place and are protected from market fluctuations such as inflation and increased need.

We appreciate the investments for:

- Transition case management for individuals discharged from the Oregon State Hospital who are at risk of homelessness
- Community mental health programs to provide outreach to, treatment for and engagement of individuals with mental illness for whom civil commitment proceedings have been initiated
- Community mental health programs to expand jail diversion services;
- Substance use disorder facilities and recovery centers
- Health care provider incentive program created in ORS 676.454 to recruit and retain diverse health care providers and attract providers to underserved areas.
- Funding the Oregon Health and Science University to coordinate the availability of behavioral health residential beds statewide.



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engaged, sustainable workforce, long-term programmatic investments is essential to turning around our state's dismal rates of substance use disorder and overdose death. This support will increase wages, as well as the number of providers delivering care, and if this is not maintained in some constructive manner, community based organizations will not be able to hold onto the gains made as part of this important and meaningful plan.

Thank you for your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monta Knudson', written in a cursive style.

Monta Knudson  
Executive Director  
Bridges to Change