

Slavic Community Center of NW
17229 SE. Division St.
Portland, OR 97236

Dear Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and members of the committee,

In 2011, a dedicated group of refugees and immigrants from Eastern Europe joined forces to establish one of Oregon's first grassroots, non-profit organizations aimed at serving the underserved and underrepresented Slavic and Eastern European community. Slavic Community Center of NW has been a valuable resource for many years, providing a diverse range of support services to help refugees and immigrants assimilate into their new surroundings, access information, and become more resilient and active members of civic life. We have helped countless individuals connect with job opportunities, navigate government services, enroll in classes, and receive wraparound support to address a range of needs.

In 2022, Slavic Community Center of NW received funding through the Public Health Modernization program. Thanks to the Public Health Modernization funds, we were able to provide crucial information and resources to the underserved and underrepresented community. Our focus areas included injury prevention, HIV and STD prevention, and tobacco prevention. However, our work was complicated by the fact that this community had been neglected for many years, and much of our work had to start from the very basics. We needed to create new materials from scratch that were appropriate and acceptable to the people receiving the information. Despite these challenges, we managed to establish effective work processes, build workforce and referral systems with other organizations. This enabled us to connect hundreds of people to STD testing, link young people to mental health professionals, and refer individuals to addiction treatments. We are also actively creating and sharing culturally-specific outreach materials that are unique and appropriate for the community.

Unlike Michelle Yeoh's character in the movie "Everything Everywhere All at Once," state agencies cannot be everywhere at once. In 2020, the Oregon Health Authority took the right step by funding over 170 community-based organizations to serve the various communities throughout Oregon. This funding was essential to the people living in our state, and the CBOs shouldered a significant burden by providing outreach and direct services to those in need. The impact of these organizations was immense. This model of funding allows organizations to better tailor their services to the communities they serve. Our organization was incredibly fortunate to receive funding, it enabled us to provide up-to-date information on COVID-19 to the Eastern European community in Ukrainian and Russian languages. With this support, we developed culturally-specific

PSAs and outreach materials, organized testing events, hosted vaccine clinics, and connected community members to vital resources.

Over the past years, our organization has made a significant impact in the lives of over 800 households across Oregon by providing food, utility, and rental assistance. Additionally, we have distributed culturally-specific food to over 7000 individuals, ensuring that they have access to nutritious meals during a time of great need. Our commitment to supporting the community remains strong. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that the community has access to the resources and support they need to thrive, especially when it comes to critical areas such as public health.

We ask for your support of the Oregon Health Authority's 2023-25 Public Health Modernization Policy Option Package request of \$286M which includes \$100M for Community-Based Organization Public Health Engagement , so that we can continue to serve not only our Eastern European community and promote better health outcomes but also serve communities throughout Oregon. By supporting CBOs, we can make our state more resilient, inclusive, and healthier, as well as try and do everything, everywhere all at once.

Slavic Community Center of NW
Timur Holove