



256 Warner Milne Road, Oregon City, OR 97045
(503) 655-8600 | www.cwsor.org

March 23, 2023

Re: Support for HB 5525

To: Chair Campos, Vice-Chair Valderrama and all the members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

On behalf of Clackamas Women's Services (CWS), we are pleased to submit testimony in support of funding the \$100M Oregon Health Authority (OHA) request for Public Health Modernization funding directly to community-based organizations.

The mission of Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) is to break the isolation of domestic and sexual violence. Incorporated in 1985 as Clackamas County's first domestic violence shelter, CWS is a community-based organization providing comprehensive, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed services to survivors of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, elder and vulnerable adult abuse, human trafficking, exploitation, and stalking.

CWS is currently providing a wide range of critical services to youth in our community through the Public Health Modernization funding. This funding enables us to provide mobile services as well as have advocates co-located in the schools.

Examples of services provided:

- Emotional safety planning – Offering a safe and confidential space for youth to discuss topics they might not have other safe adults to talk to about.
- Title IX navigation and advocacy – Acting as a bridge between school systems and students to provide clarity around processes such as Title IX. In addition to helping students understand the processes, our advocates can connect with school personnel and advocate for ease of access by encouraging the posting of forms and process explanations in places that can be easily found online.
- Crisis intervention – Short-term intervention to help students regulate and finish their day at school rather than going home. One example is when a co-located youth advocate had an impromptu check in with a student who was having a panic attack after an interaction with their abuser at school. The youth advocate provided a confidential space and engaged in a breathing exercise until the student felt that they were able to engage in conversation about what happened. The youth advocate then talked through safety planning for the rest of the day and planned to follow up in the morning. The student was then able to return to the classroom and finish their day on campus.

- Resource connection – Students who have been impacted by violence often have other resource needs. Youth advocates connect students to a range of community resources such as clothing, food, school supplies, transportation assistance for removing barriers to critical services, or access to safe cell phones.
- Supportive family services – It is often the case that safe caregivers are in need of DV/SA resources. By having a youth advocate in schools, we are able to make connections for the entire family.
- Support for school personnel – Youth advocates often act as a resource for school staff who have questions about how to support students impacted by violence. In addition to professional development training for school staff.

We stand with our partners across the state as part of the Community Health Equity Coalition made up of more than 80 community-based organizations who are collectively responding to the public health needs of more than 500,000 Oregonians.

Please fund \$100M for community-based organizations in public health modernization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Erlbaum', is centered on the page.

Melissa Erlbaum
Executive Director