



ALEX CUYLER

Intergovernmental Relations Manager
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DATE: March 24, 2023
TO: Joint Subcommittee On Human Services
RE: SB 5525, relating to the financial administration of the Oregon Health Authority

Dear Co-Chair Campos, Co-Chair Valderrama, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Lane County wishes to express our support for the Oregon Health Authority budget outlined in SB 5525. We ask that the Subcommittee on Human Services work to ensure appropriate funding for Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) programs, essential public health programs, and behavioral health facilities and resources.

NFP programs provide an integral system of support that is necessary for the health and well-being of people who are pregnant and new families who are experiencing financial and social barriers. These services rely on Medicaid reimbursements, which requires non-federal match funding. County health departments are solely responsible to make the local match. Those who cannot make a local match are unable to implement NFP programs, creating many disparities among the state. State funding for the match would ensure that all counties can continue to provide this necessary service to at risk families in our community.

Bringing our public health system into the 21st century began with the first legislative investment in public health modernization in 2015 (HB 3100). A modernized public health system provides core public health functions and maintains the flexibility to focus on new health challenges, including emerging infectious diseases, climate change, threats from man-made and natural disasters, and alarming increases in chronic diseases. It is time to ensure full implementation and complete the work of modernization in Oregon.

The increasing demand for housing people with behavioral health needs continues to persist. Oregon has yet to recover residential bed capacity to pre-pandemic levels. New investments should have a focus on ensuring that people experiencing behavioral health issues have a safe space to receive the treatment services that they need. Funding for expanding residential treatment facilities will decrease frequent returns to jails and state hospitals, and prevent vulnerable populations from ending up in the criminal justice system. These investments will also help recruit and retain a workforce with the expertise to help improve the lives and safety of our communities.

The Oregon Health Authority budget ensures that Oregon prioritizes the well-being of our communities across the state. Lane County strongly urges you to fully fund these budget items which are essential to saving the lives of those who are most at risk.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY ALEX CUYLER, IGR MANAGER