



May 2, 2023

Re: Support for HB 2446

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the committee,

SO Health-E, the Regional Health Equity Coalition (RHEC) serving Jackson and Josephine Counties, urges support for HB 2446.

Our community, and our state, are still recovering from Covid-19, the 2020 Almeda and Obenchain fires, a housing crisis, mental health crisis, and more while grappling with longstanding challenges from structural racism and income inequality.

One good thing emerging from these challenging years is strengthened partnerships focused on community needs. Our regional CCOs AllCare Health and Jackson Care Connect are important partners with us in making equity investments where they are needed most during these challenges.

Right now, there are high levels of uncertainty in the Oregon health policy landscape. We do not believe it is in service to communities or OHP members to pull focus to contracting from current work focused on supporting Oregonians through:

- The end of the Public Health Emergency
- Medicaid re-determination for 1.5 million Oregonians
- Communities, like ours, still recovering from Covid-19
- The work to train and recruit more culturally and linguistically diverse providers
- The work to expand social support programs especially around housing

As a community-based organization working on the ground in Southern Oregon, we need all of our partners focused with us on responding to community needs during this time of recovery, implementation, and transition. We believe that in a few years there will be more certainty than there is today in the Oregon health policy landscape, and that due to investments in this critical moment, many in our community will be in a more stable and equitable place.

That's why we urge your support for HB 2446, which pushes the CCO procurement process out two more years to give CCOs the ability to continue to focus on working with communities to address these issues. We ask that it be passed out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

Thank you for your service to Oregonians on the Senate Committee on Health Care,

Sincerely,

Annie Valtierra-Sanchez, Director

SO Health-E, the Regional Health Equity Coalition serving Jackson and Josephine Counties

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