

# FAIRSHOT FOR ALL

February 5, 2024

Chair Nosse and Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health

The Fair Shot For All Coalition strongly supports HB 4070 as part of our 2024 People's Budget funding priorities. HB 4070 provides evidence-based resources that will be quickly available for schools to support youth mental and physical health. The close connection between health, educational outcomes, and economic equity makes this a critical priority for Oregon this year.

Many young people in Oregon still lack adequate access to the health care they need — and mental health care in particular — due to stigma, a lack of health insurance, an insurance policy with limited coverage, a lack of understanding about how to access care, poor access to transportation (especially in rural areas), and a lack of medical providers providing care under the Oregon Health Plan. Oregon ranks dead last in the nation for youth mental health and black and brown students, as well as those living in poverty, are more likely to lack access to mental health resources.

School-Based Health Centers address each of these barriers by providing all school-aged youth with the care they need, whether they have private insurance, public assistance, or no insurance. A study conducted in Oregon found that youth are 10-21x more likely to seek mental health support at a school-based health center (SBHC) and that SBHCs that increased mental health capacity were 12% less likely to report a depressive episode; 16% less likely to report suicidal ideation; and 18% less likely to report a suicide attempt.

We strongly urge your support of HB 4070.

# FAIRSHOT FOR ALL

**Fair Shot for All** is an economic justice coalition of grassroots organizations and labor unions across the state who work together to create opportunities for all working families to thrive, build power with our communities, and dismantle historic and systemic economic inequities in our state. We are organized across race, class, and gender and center those of us who have been impacted most: Oregonians who are Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or people of color; LGBTQ+; women; and/or working class families. There is incredible strength in our numbers and our fierce belief in the future we are fighting for.

## OUR STEERING COMMITTEE

