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February 12, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature,

**Subject:** Testimony in Support of House Bill 4139 2024 - Urgent Need for Expansion of Behavioral and Alcohol and Drug Withdrawal Programs in Yamhill County

Dear Esteemed Legislators,

I am writing today as a Yamhill County citizen to express my strong support for House Bill 4139, 2024, and to underscore the critical need to expand behavioral alcohol and drug withdrawal programs in Yamhill County. This bill represents a beacon of hope for many individuals and families within our community who are battling the specter of substance abuse and mental health issues.

Yamhill County, a vibrant community with deep roots and a strong spirit, is currently facing a crisis that threatens to undermine the well-being of its residents. The demand for behavioral health and substance abuse treatment services far exceeds the current capacity. Early estimates indicate a pressing need to expand our facilities by over 40 beds to meet the community's demand adequately. This gap in service availability leaves many of our most vulnerable citizens without the critical support they need during their darkest times.

Applying for the necessary permits and approvals to expand treatment facilities under the current Certificate of Need (CON) system is prohibitively expensive and excessively lengthy. This quagmire not only hampers our ability to respond to urgent community health needs but also significantly inflates the cost of projects, diverting funds that could otherwise be used to enhance service provision and accessibility for those in need.

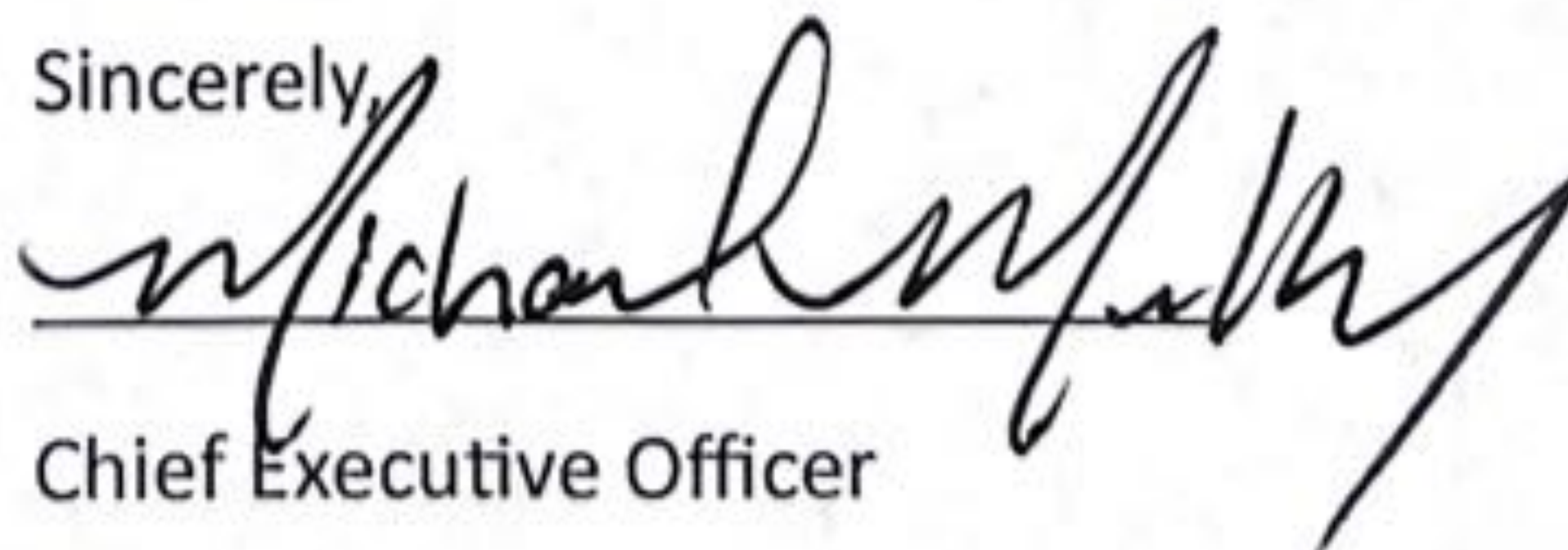
House Bill 4139, 2024, presents a timely solution to these challenges by streamlining the application process for expanding healthcare facilities, specifically targeting behavioral and substance abuse treatment needs. By supporting this bill, we can reduce the unnecessary barriers that delay critical expansions and efficiently use our resources to benefit those in need directly.

The expansion of behavioral and alcohol and drug withdrawal programs in Yamhill County is not just an investment in healthcare infrastructure; it is an investment in the very fabric of our community. It is about providing hope and support to individuals and families ensnared by substance abuse and mental health challenges. It is about building a stronger, healthier, and more resilient community for future generations.

I urge you to consider the pressing needs of Yamhill County and the transformative impact that House Bill 4139 2024, can have on our ability to meet these needs. By supporting this bill, you will be taking a significant step towards addressing the urgent healthcare challenges facing our community and paving the way for a brighter, healthier future for all residents of Yamhill County.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and your continued service to the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,



Chief Executive Officer

Willamette Valley Medical Center