To: Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

Date: February 26, 2024

Subject: Support Jail MOUD inclusion in 4002

Co-Chairs Lieber, Kropf, and members of the committee,

My name is Dr. Maxine Dexter and I am honored to be the State Representative for House District 33, which includes NW & Downtown Portland, Linnton, and Cathedral Park. I am grateful for this opportunity today to share my strong support for the inclusion of Oregon Jail-Based Medications for Opioid Use Disorder Grant Program to help treat people in jail with opioid use disorders in the -24 amendments for HB 4002.

It is our responsibility to ensure that those in custody have available the life-saving care that they need. Opioid treatment, screening and transition planning services are no exception to this. Overdose is the third leading cause of death in jails[1] and the "opioid overdose risk is 10 times greater for those recently released from prison".[2]

When addressing the addiction and substance use crisis in Oregon, we cannot allow those who are most vulnerable to be left without supportive services. Those in custody in local correctional facilities need access to safe medication, support through withdrawals and treatment for opioid use disorders. People should not come out of these facilities closer to overdosing than they entered: this is a disservice to Oregonians. Additionally, it is a violation of the mandate to provide adequate health care to those in jails.

It is important to me as a clinician that all those in Oregon receive necessary medical care. This absolutely extends to those in custody and I strongly urge you to adopt the -24 amendments to help reduce the number of preventable opioid overdoses in Oregon's jails.

Sincerely,

Representative Maxine Dexter, M.D.
House District 33 (Northwest and Downtown Portland, Linnton, and Cathedral Park)

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[1] https://perma.cc/W8GC-A9N8

[2] https://news.ohsu.edu/2023/03/10/opioid-overdose-risk-is-10-times-greater-for-those-recently-released-from-prison