

Meli Rose

Deputy Director

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Oregon State Legislature

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

Chair Campos

900 Court Street NE

Salem, Oregon 97301

Support for the Governor's Recommended Budget

Dear Chair Campos and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services,

My name is Meli Rose, and I am the Deputy Director of Iron Tribe Network. I am writing to express my strong support for the Governor's recommended budget, which includes \$188 million in investments aimed at reducing homelessness. The Governor's budget specifically highlights the importance of not only connecting individuals with a home but also providing them with the necessary resources to address additional issues, such as securing stable employment and managing behavioral health or addiction.

I wholeheartedly support her full recommendations for behavioral health investments. These investments are crucial, and the specific allocations are incredibly meaningful to both me and Iron Tribe Network:

- \$90 million for substance use disorder, residential treatment, and withdrawal management
- \$24 million in workforce incentives to ensure Oregon can expand this capacity
- \$19.6 million for diversion and deflection services through the Criminal Justice Commission
- \$17 million for investments in serving youth with inpatient SUD and psychiatric services

Furthermore, I support the full Medicaid budget as outlined by the Governor.

These investments are not just numbers; they represent hope and change for countless individuals and families. As someone deeply involved in this work, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of robust recovery systems. On average, in just 5 Iron Tribe Network family recovery homes, 130 kids are returned from foster care to their parents in our homes each year. This resource changed the life of many families in Oregon, breaking the cycle of substance use disorder.

Our organization has been a beacon of hope for many, providing the necessary tools and support for recovery. So many families in Oregon have been positively impacted by a robust recovery system. Having resources in early recovery is essential to the overall success of individuals and families being able to return to self-sustainability.

Conclusion

In closing, I strongly urge the committee to vote in support of the full behavioral health budget and Medicaid budget as recommended by the Governor. These investments are not just necessary; they are critical to addressing the ongoing crises of homelessness, mental health, and addiction on our streets right now. By supporting these recommendations, we can make a significant and lasting impact on the lives of many Oregonians.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Meli Rose

Deputy Director

Iron Tribe Network