



February 26, 2025

TO: Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

**RE: SB 610 – BM 110 BHRN Funding and OAC Decision Making**

Co-Chairs Prozanski and Kropf, Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP) I am submitting testimony regarding SB 610 and the proposed –1 amendments. AOCMHP represents all community mental health programs (CMHP) across the state, each covering a county or group of counties, and one tribal CMHP, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Most CMHPs are currently Behavioral Health Resource Network (BHRN) providers or serve as conveners of their BHRNs.

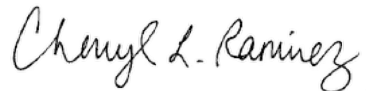
While we are neutral on SB 610-1 because we are not able to support the proposed formula, we agree with the proposed board composition and public process outlined in Section 1. We are deeply concerned with the Oversight and Accountability Council (OAC)'s BHRN funding decision making process for the 2025-29 funding cycle and the bias against counties, CMHPs and SUD treatment providers that has surfaced in the public meetings and in the grant decisions. Here are just a few examples of subjective and biased decision making by the OAC based on inaccurate information:

- Oregon Health Authority (OHA) staff and OAC members have repeatedly stated that CMHPs and other treatment providers are able to bill for their services and don't need the BHRN funding. Like any other BHRN providers, CMHPs are not able to bill for services they are providing with marijuana tax revenue, such as pre-treatment outreach and engagement, harm reduction, outreach centers, etc.
- Funding is divided up among various providers randomly without considering the needs of a county, resulting in jeopardizing effective programs.
- Some entities that have been awarded BHRN funding are not in the counties they are proposing to serve and have received current BHRN funding without having served people in those counties .
- There was a priority scoring matrix that was not known to applicants, and some were not even considered based on these priorities although they have implemented effective programs over the last three years.

In our currently resource-strained behavioral health system, we have to ensure that all funding sources, including marijuana tax-revenue, are well coordinated and distributed effectively and efficiently in all parts of the state. It is clear that changes are needed to ensure that the OAC shares these goals and conducts an effective, well-informed and publicly transparent process to distribute critical resources.

Thanks for the opportunity to share our concerns about the BHRN funding decisions and the OAC public meeting processes in relation to the bill before you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl L. Ramirez".

Cherryl Ramirez

Executive Director

Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs