



## SAPPHIRE HEALTH SERVICES

A Senior Housing and Healthcare Provider

03/20/2025

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to emphasize the critical importance of continued investment in healthcare benefits for essential workers in Oregon's long-term care sector. As an employer in this industry, Sapphire at Fernhill understands that access to high-quality, affordable healthcare is a key factor in attracting and retaining a stable workforce. The Essential Worker Healthcare Trust (EWHT) has played a vital role in ensuring caregivers have comprehensive, cost-effective healthcare benefits, which support the recruitment and retention of the dedicated professionals who care for some of Oregon's most vulnerable residents. Continued funding for programs like EWHT is essential to maintaining a strong and sustainable long-term care workforce.

- EWHT has helped our organization recruit and retain some of the most amazing staff in the Portland area. With increasing competition benefits are one of the largest pulls for staff. We've had staff leave our facility for better wages but then return to our facility because of the benefits.
- In my experience as an administrator, I have never seen staff so content with their benefit plans.
- These benefits help our organization stand out in a sea of other similar facilities. We would see a far more difficult time recruiting and retaining without these benefits.

Ongoing investment in the Essential Worker Healthcare Trust is an investment in Oregon's long-term care workforce, ensuring that we can continue to provide quality care to those who need it most.

Sincerely,

Alex McKay, LNHA  
Executive Director  
Sapphire at Fernhill