



To: Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
From: Alicia Beymer, Chief Administrative Officer at Sacred Heart RiverBend
Date: March 24, 2025
Re: POP 550BH, Oregon Behavioral Health Deflection Grant
Oregon Criminal Justice Commission Budget

Dear Co-Chairs, Broadman and Evans, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of funding for the Oregon Behavioral Health Deflection Grant. It has been my honor to represent hospitals that provide acute mental health treatment as an appointed member of the Improving People's Access to Community-based Treatment, Supports and Services (IMPACTS) Grant Committee since the inception of the program in 2020.

This program initially focused on supporting individuals with a mental health or substance use disorder that were also high utilizers of the criminal justice system, hospitals, and institutional placements. In 2024, the Oregon Behavioral Health Deflection Program (BHD) was established under the IMPACTS Grant Committee. These programs focus on promoting collaboration between law enforcement agencies and behavioral health entities for individuals who may have substance use disorder, another health disorder or cooccurring disorders to create community-based pathways to recovery.

Through the evolution of the IMPACTS Grant Committee, it has become apparent that both IMPACTS and BHD programs are doing the right work, at the right time, and utilizing the right resources that meet the needs of each respective community where IMPACTS & BHD services are provided. This is so important as we face several budget shortfalls at the federal and state level.

These programs have demonstrated beneficial and lifechanging outcomes for individuals who otherwise might still be struggling in profound ways. By offering meaningful and innovative community-based services, we address the underlying behavioral health conditions that disproportionately affect their involvement with the criminal justice system and/or may be high utilizers of the emergency departments. This holistic approach not only supports individuals in their recovery journeys but also promotes overall community well-being.

I have been impressed by the endless possibilities to reduce homelessness and increase access to mental health and addiction services presented by the grantees around the state. The innovative community-based support systems made possible by IMPACTS & BHD grants are demonstrating positive and life changing results. Through the strong work achieved by grantees and the organized and professional approach by the IMPACTS Grant staff, these programs are demonstrating a strong foundation for the development of meaningful and sustainable programs focused on improving the health, safety, and quality of life for individuals with mental health or substance use disorders who are frequently engaged with the criminal justice system, hospitals, and institutions throughout the state.

Based on my experience on the IMPACTS Grant Committee and the positive outcomes we have seen in Lane County, our ask is that you fully fund the POP 550BH.

Thank you for providing me an opportunity to provide support for this important program. I am happy to follow up with your office on any follow up questions you have.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alicia Beymer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alicia Beymer
Chief Administrative Officer
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