

March 28, 2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Request for \$6 million match for Columbia Memorial Hospital's FEMA BRIC grant.

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and members of the Committee,

For the record, I am Mark Kujala, I'm Chair of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners and the Foundation Director at Columbia Memorial Hospital – or CMH.

I wish to speak to you about a request for matching funds to leverage a federal grant that will prepare CMH for a natural disaster and potentially save lives in our community.

We were thrilled to be selected as 1 of 5 Oregon recipients in 2023 of the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant, or BRIC grant. The \$20 million dollar award was one of the largest announced for the state that year.

We now need to supply the 30% match to this federal grant – or \$ 6 million dollars – to access this federal funding and complete construction of a resilient hospital where 1900 people can evacuate to in the aftermath of a Cascadia subduction zone event or any natural disaster.

This resiliency project is part of a larger \$300 million dollar hospital expansion which is currently 97% funded. The local match requirement represents just 2% of the total cost, and the State of Oregon can be the last dollars in to complete this project. CMH has a flexible funding timeline, so lottery bonds can be an option, should the Committee so choose.

We have been cheered along every step of the way. This letter contains 44 logos demonstrating an endorsement from the community and beyond. We have been gratified to see such broad support of our efforts. I want to thank Representative Cyrus Javadi and Senator Suzanne Weber for advocating for us so effectively.

We are very appreciative that the Joint Committee on Ways and Means chose Astoria to host one of your 2025 community budget meetings. I hope to invite all of you back to celebrate the state's investment and partnership that contributed to building this monumental community asset.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Kujala
Clatsop County Commissioner
CMH Foundation Director