

April 16, 2025

To: Co-Chair Kate Lieber  
Co-Chair Tawna Sanchez  
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means

From: Gina Nikkel, Executive Director  
Association of Oregon Counties

Re: AOC 2025 Budget Priorities Update

Co-Chairs Sanchez and Lieber,

The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) is a non-partisan member organization that advocates on issues that unite all county governing bodies and have an impact on county governance, budgets, and services. As you know, counties are the state's partner in government and the boots on the ground that implement and deliver many of the services and programs created by the legislature.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our budget priorities for the 2025 session. The below items are all related to the delivery of essential county services — many by state mandate — to every Oregonian.

### AOC 2025 Budget Priorities

#### CAFFA Funding of County Assessment and Taxation

- [House Bill 3518](#): Modernizes the mechanisms that fund the County Assessment Function Funding Assistance (CAFFA) program, which provides support for county assessment and taxation offices. One of three tools in HB 3518 is the reinstatement of the state's support for the CAFFA program with a \$10 million general fund allocation.

#### Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Services

- [House Bill 2056](#): \$64.8 million to close the funding gap for mandated civil commitment, aid and assist, and crisis response services caseloads identified by HB 4092 (2024) actuarial cost study.

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- Oregon Health Authority POP 550: \$20 million in workforce training and a targeted investment of \$20 million to increase wages for workers providing crisis response, street outreach, medication-assisted treatment, and case management.
- [House Bill 5025](#): \$16.5 million Governor recommended allocation to Community Mental Health Programs (CMPHs) for jail diversion services. In 2024, the legislature allocated one-time resources for CMHPs to provide jail diversion services to individuals in their communities. The funding in HB 5025 is necessary to continue these services.
- [Senate Bill 5526](#): Department of Human Services budget – \$38 million full funding for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) case management. This funding would draw down roughly \$50 million in matching federal funds and provide 100% full funding to Community Developmental Disabilities Programs.

#### Community Corrections

- [House Bill 5004](#): Department of Corrections budget - Fully fund the 2024 Community Corrections Cost Study capitated rate of \$18.18 per person, per day. The full funding need is \$8 million above the Governor's budget request, based on the April Corrections Population Forecast.

#### Coordinated Homelessness Response

- [House Bill 3644 A](#): \$217 million to ensure maintained regional coordination and current shelter capacity, including lifesaving temporary severe weather shelters. Additionally, please clarify by amendment or budget note that nightly severe weather and poor air quality shelters are eligible for this funding.

#### Deflection programs

- \$46.9 million for deflection programs is needed to keep people with substance use challenges out of the justice system and connected to treatment and recovery supports. This request reflects the funding floor to maintain current programs in the next biennium, as Behavioral Health Resource Networks, which many deflection programs lean on, face revenue cuts beginning in July.

#### Forest Trust Land Counties

- [House Bill 3103](#): Requires a sustainable harvest on state forest lands to provide a level of certainty to the trust land counties that rely on these harvest revenues. The Oregon Department of Forestry requires staff support to maintain this modeling. Trust Land Counties have relied on the state and county partnership and revenue from state forest harvests since the contract was executed over 70 years ago.

## Public Health

- [House Bill 3916](#): \$5 million for training, scholarships and stipends, and professional development to increase the number of local public health professionals, including epidemiologists, community health workers, and community paramedics.
- [House Bill 2954](#): \$25 million to local public health departments and federally recognized tribes in Oregon to provide addiction prevention services. By implementing effective family and school-based substance use prevention programs, Oregon is estimated to save \$18 for every \$1 invested.
- Next phase of Public Health Modernization: \$25 million for communicable disease prevention and control

## Water

- [House Bill 3116](#): Provides continued funding for Place Based Planning efforts underway in four basins across the state and allocates funding for new place-based efforts.

## Wildfire

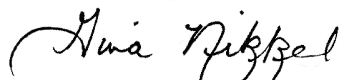
- The total amount needed for each biennium for suppression and mitigation work by ODF and OSFM is \$280 million. AOC appreciated having a seat on the interim wildfire funding workgroup and is committed to working with the legislature and stakeholders to find a long-term funding solution.

## Wildlife

- [House Bill 5009](#): Reinstate \$2 million biennial investment in Wildlife Services through the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife budgets.
- [House Bill 5502](#): Oregon Department of Agriculture -- \$2 million per biennium for the Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program.

AOC appreciates the legislature's engagement with counties and welcomes further discussion on any of these matters.

Sincerely,



Gina Nikkel  
Executive Director  
Association of Oregon Counties