

February 5, 2026

Oregon State Legislature
House Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
Submitted electronically via OLIS

RE: HB 4047, relating to rural emergency hospitals

Chair Nosse and Members of the Committee:

The Hospital Association of Oregon is a mission-driven nonprofit association representing Oregon's 60 community hospitals. We appreciate the opportunity to express support for HB 4047, which would require the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to establish a new licensing option in Oregon: Rural Emergency Hospitals.

The Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) designation was created by Congress through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. This hospital designation is administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)¹ and includes explicit Conditions of Participation and regulatory requirements. While Congress created the REH designation, each state must individually establish its own licensing of these hospitals under state or local law. Oregon does not currently allow for a hospital to be designated as an REH. As of December 2025, 18 states including New York, Illinois, and New Mexico have established their own licensing process for this designation.²

The purpose of the REH designation is to maintain access to lifesaving emergency hospital services, observation care, and outpatient services in communities that can no longer sustain a critical access hospital or other specified small rural hospitals. It is important that OHA take the steps necessary to

¹ Rural Emergency Hospitals certification and compliance, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/health-safety-standards/certification-compliance/rural-emergency-hospitals>

² Rural Emergency Hospital overview, National Conference of State Legislatures, <https://www.ncsl.org/health/rural-emergency-hospitals>

allow for the licensing of REHs in our state, so that the licensing option and process will be established if it becomes needed to protect access to health care in rural Oregon communities.

We urge your support for HB 4047. Thank you for the opportunity to engage on behalf of our members and the communities they serve, including the 1.5 million Oregonians who live in rural and frontier areas of the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a light blue oval. The signature reads "Tm".

Travis Meuwissen
Director of Government Affairs
Hospital Association of Oregon

About the Hospital Association of Oregon

Founded in 1934, the Hospital Association of Oregon (HAO) is a mission-driven, nonprofit trade association representing Oregon's 60 hospitals. Together, hospitals are the sixth largest private employer statewide, employing more than 70,000 employees. Committed to fostering a stronger, safer, more equitable Oregon where all people have access to the high-quality care they need, the hospital association supports Oregon's hospitals so they can support their communities; educates government officials and the public on the state's health landscape, and works collaboratively with policymakers, community based organizations and the health care community to build consensus on and advance health care policy benefiting the state's four million residents.



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