



LANE COUNTY

Vanessa Cornwall, Intergovernmental Relations

541-514-7522 vanessa.cornwall@lanecountyor.gov

February 5, 2026

RE: Support HB 4070

House Committee on Behavioral Health

Chair Pham, Vice Chairs Edwards and Javadi, and members of the committee:

For the record, I am Eve Gray, Director of Health & Human Services for Lane County. I am testifying today in support of HB 4070 with the -1 amendment.

First, I want to call out the importance of the strengthened parity language in this bill. We are aware that the Medicaid system is currently being reviewed to identify how to balance future budgets. We have also heard some statements that behavioral health is a major driver of cost overruns in Medicaid. We would argue that healthcare as a whole is expensive and, collectively, has contributed to unsustainable cost overruns. We fear that the easy thing to do is to see that behavioral health utilization, which has increased with the state's commitment to parity, is expensive and cut there. This approach would again prioritize physical healthcare above behavioral healthcare. We must instead think about the healthcare system as a whole and ensure any reductions are applied in an equitable way across physical and behavioral healthcare. We believe that strengthening language around parity in statute will help us achieve that goal.

In regard to the -1 amendment, this language brings an important change to the stabilization center statute, ORS 430.627. The original statutory language required a physical health assessment upon arrival at a stabilization center. OHA has determined that an assessment must be done by a licensed medical provider, which is not available onsite at every stabilization center. Changing the word assess to screen, allows licensed behavioral health staff to check for physical health needs and refer the patient to a different facility if they need to be addressed. This requested change to ORS 430.627 will expedite the state's ability to write rules for stabilization centers. Thus far, rules have not been written because the statutory requirement for an assessment may cause existing stabilization centers to close. We know this is not anyone's goal. Without rules, however, other stabilization centers like ours are unable to expeditiously move our projects forward. We are in a holding pattern and are looking for a way to proceed. We have had conversations with OHA and AOCMHP to ensure we are all aligned, and we have identified no opposition to this change. It is our hope that we can pass this minor fix to help stabilization center projects across the state maintain and expand access.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY VANESSA CORNWALL, LANE COUNTY
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS OFFICER