



February 3, 2026

Co-chair Leiber and Sanchez, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

For the record, my name is Eric VanNood and I'm the Psychiatric Crisis Counselor work at SACU.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as you move along the ways and means process relating to the budget reduction exercise the agencies presented to you last year. I want to highlight the importance of the SACU program and the devastating impact any reductions would have on the community.

I work as a Psychiatric Crisis Counselor for the Crisis Outreach and Assessment Team at the Stabilization and Crisis Unit of DHS. My work is essential for helping individuals to stay safe and learn positive strengthening skills to increase their self respect and respect for others so that they can transition back to living in the community in a safe, beneficial, and productive manner. Any reduction to SACU support and funding could jeopardize the work we do to help keep these individuals and society at large safe and cared for.

We understand that the state of Oregon is experiencing instability and there are tough decisions being made. As elected leaders, it is your constitutional duty to balance a budget and with that comes the responsibility to also look at other ways to continue to keep Oregon a place where people from all socioeconomic backgrounds can thrive.

I am a voter from [insert your legislative district, and who your representative is] and I'm here today to speak for the thousands of people we serve. Passing a cuts only budget this session without keeping the most impacted at the center of the decision making process will have extreme consequences. They are your neighbors, your friends, family, and most importantly, your constituents. I urge you to strongly consider using reserves to keep families afloat and spend more time thinking about making strategic decisions for the next few years.

With respect,

Eric VanNood

Portland, Oregon