



**Oregon Chapter
American College of
Emergency Physicians**

Feb. 24, 2026

To: Chair Rep. Ben Bowman
Vice Chair: Rep. Lucetta Elmer
Members of the House Rules Committee

From: Christian Smith MD, FACEP
Immediate Past President, OR-ACEP

RE: HB 4075, Support for Bay Area Hospital

Chair Vice-Chair and members of the committee, my name is Dr. Christian Smith, and I'm here on behalf of Oregon ACEP, the Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians. OR-ACEP is a medical society that has represented physicians specializing in emergency medicine since 1971 and its members share a commitment to improve emergency healthcare for all Oregonians.

OR-ACEP supports HB 4075, which would authorize the state to refinance some or all of the Bay Area Hospitals private debt through the Unclaimed Property and Estates Fund. It permits up to 20 percent of the Unclaimed Property and Estates Fund to be used to issue stabilization loans to qualifying rural hospitals.

I work shifts as an emergency physician at Lower Umpqua Hospital and Southern Coos Hospital which are small critical access hospitals near Bay Area Hospital. Bay Area Hospital is the only large hospital serving the Oregon coast and is a crucial referral center for patients requiring specialist or critical care for the entire southern coast.

There are unique challenges for rural hospitals; many populations are older, sicker, lower income, and more medically vulnerable than urban counterparts. Long transport times to rural emergency departments can potentially delay access for time-sensitive conditions. It is also more difficult to recruit specialists to work in rural communities. Bay Area Hospital is a crucial hub for emergency care and closure or reduction in services would further jeopardize the medical safety net.

Rural emergency medicine is a tremendously important component of the health care framework for rural Americans who deserve the same level of care available in urban centers. Failure to support Bay Area Hospital poses a critical risk to the health of the entire community.

We urge your support of HB 4075.

Chapter President- Patsy Chenpanas MD, FACEP
President-Elect Brittany Arnold, MD

Chapter Executive- Michele Byers
Government Rel. Director- Katy King