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March 17, 2015

To: Representative Duane A. Stark

RE: Letter of Support for Grants Pass Sobering Center

As a major behavioral health partner with local CCOs and the Executive Director of Josephine County's Community Mental Health Program, I am writing to express my strong support of the Grants Pass Sobering Center.

We have been struggling for a number of years now with a total lack of sobering resources in Josephine County. As a result of this, many individuals in need of sobering services present at more costly and inappropriate services such as mental health, Three River's Hospital Emergency Department or may even be incarcerated. Frequently, intoxicated individuals are brought to these services via law enforcement, another costly and inappropriate intervention. The nearest sobering unit to Josephine County is approximately 32 miles south in Medford. Our local businesses, medical, mental health, substance abuse treatment professionals, public safety and citizens are frustrated by the inadequate services available to help these individuals. As a result, a strong group of dedicated community leaders have been working diligently on developing a Sobering Center for our community. This proposed Center would employ specially trained staff to monitor and manage this population in a professional, ethical and safe manner. This Center will receive support from local alcohol and drug treatment and mental health agencies to screen and engage participants into needed services. These services, in conjunction with the Sobering Center, will produce significantly better outcomes for our citizens. It will also reduce the inappropriate and costly use of resources such as public safety and emergency rooms and the repeated cycling of some individuals through these services without the benefit of appropriate treatment.

The Grants Pass Sobering Center will keep impaired individuals safe for a brief period of time enabling treatment professionals to assess them and begin treatment with the goal of service engagement and recovery.

Thank you for your time and support of the Grants Pass Sobering Center Board and our community's desire to increase services and safety within Josephine County.

Sincerely,

Karla McCafferty
Executive Director
Options for Southern Oregon