



JAY BOZIEVICH

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DATE: March 7, 2017
TO: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services
RE: HB 5026, relating to the financial administration of the Oregon Health Authority

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Steiner Hayward and Representative Rayfield:

As the Lane County Board of Commissioners sought to develop our legislative priorities for this session, the news of the Governor's proposed closure of the newly built and opened Junction City Hospital rose immediately to one of our top tier priorities. We unanimously agreed to a position of OPPOSE when it comes to this particular part of the Health Authority's budget. I am pasting below the document we used when determining our OPPOSE position on this issue, and I urge you to read our rationale:

The Lane County Board of Commissioners finds:

- The Board of Commissioners previously supported development of the Junction City Hospital on February 23, 2011, pursuant to Board Order No. 11-2-23-16
- Oregon pursued the development of the Junction City Hospital so that it could replace aging facilities in Portland and Eastern Oregon, both of which were subsequently shuttered.
- The Junction City Hospital has operated the 25-bed hospital licensed units and two 25-bed secure residential treatment units.
- The promise of the Junction City Hospital was to implement a treatment model of smaller wards, single or double rooms, and centralized treatment services aimed at improving outcomes for patient, decreasing lengths of stay and improving safety for patients and staff. It was characterized as a treatment "mall" by providing a secure place where individuals will have more independence, choices, and responsibilities.
- The Oregon State Hospital Framework Master Plan noted that "Oregon's system of publicly funded care for adults with severe and persistent mental illness needed significant improvement...and clarified the role and size of OSH within an improved community-based system."
- The Oregon State Hospital, in its 2017-2019 Agency Request Budget (Oregon Health Authority) makes no mention of a closure proposal.
- Neither the Board of Commissioners nor staff in any of the pertinent Departments or Divisions was alerted to the closure proposal in the Governor's 2017-19 Recommended Budget.

The Board of Commissioners further finds:

- Oregon's Performance Plan for Mental Health Services for Adults with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness (approved by the US Department of Justice in July,

2016) provides that the Oregon Health Authority will enter into performance-based contracts with Community Mental Health Programs (or other entities) to pursue compliance with enhanced discharge procedures from the State Hospital.

- In spite of this language, the number of secure treatment beds in Lane County (outside of the Hospital) is fewer than 25, and there are no identifiable new resources within the Governor's recommended budget that will improve that capacity.
- There has been no communication between the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission and the Oregon Health Authority with respect to Jail Diversion efforts outlined in the Performance Plan.

Finally, the Board of Commissioners is aware that:

- Lane County's District Attorney has cited significant improvement in sentencing options for the severely mentally ill in our communities and suggests closure of the Junction City Hospital will increase the number of mentally ill who will be sentenced to jail.
- Lane County's Sheriff has reviewed the existing population housed within the Lane County Jail and has documented that 60% of this population is now diagnosed with mental illness or has been referred for treatment.

It is due to these influences that the Lane County Board of Commissioners cannot support Governor Brown's budget proposal to close the Junction City Hospital in 2018. The proposal unacceptably shifts responsibility to local jurisdictions without making new resources available to those jurisdictions, creating a de-facto unfunded mandate. The Board of Commissioners will ask the Legislative Assembly to reject the closure of the Junction City Hospital unless adequate funding is appropriated to implement an equivalent level of services for the benefit of those Oregonians with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness and an adequate transition plan is developed.