

Providence Health & Services
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April 19, 2019

The Honorable Fred Girod and
The Honorable Paul Holvey
Co-Chairs, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: House Bill 5030 – Lottery bonds for Housing for Mental Health Fund

Dear Senator Girod, Representative Holvey and members of the committee:

Providence Health & Services is guided by a Mission of caring that the Sisters of Providence began in the Northwest more than 160 years ago. Continuing our tradition of compassion, especially for the poor and vulnerable, Providence is committed to reaching beyond the walls of our clinical settings to create healthier communities. We do this work through direct investments in each of our communities, partnerships with organizations that share our vision and advocacy in support of public policy that will improve our communities for years to come.

Housing is an important, if not the most important, health-related social determinant. This is evident in national research, but we also see it in our local data. Based on information collected during Providence's last Community Health Needs Assessment, stable housing was recognized as an unmet need in each area we serve – from the Columbia Gorge to Southern Oregon. This is especially true for individuals living with severe mental illness and substance use disorders.

The relationship between health and housing is critical, which is why Providence strongly supports NAMI Oregon's request for \$20 million in lottery bond proceeds for deposit in the Housing for Mental Health Fund. These funds are necessary to meet the needs of a specific, underserved population seeking crisis respite, treatment housing and integrated housing – often with integrated support services. A proposal that compliments the Governor's request for permanent supported housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment; we look forward to partnering with the state and NAMI Oregon in this critical work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Vance".

Lisa Vance
Chief Executive
Providence Health & Services - Oregon