



Testimony in support of HB 5030

Replenish the Housing for Mental Health Fund

April 19, 2019

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey, and Members of Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I would like to express our support for another \$20 million through authorization of lottery bonds in HB 5030 to replenish the Housing for Mental Health Fund made permanent within the Treasury Department in 2017 through HB 3063. A broad array of supported housing is one of the most urgent needs expressed by community mental health programs across the state, whether they are in frontier, rural or urban counties.

Safe, supported housing is a basic, essential need for people with mental health and substance use disorders to enable them to remain in their communities and to avoid more restrictive and costly institutional care or incarceration. Increasing the number of supported housing opportunities is also a priority objective in the USDOJ-Oregon Performance Plan, which requires a multi-system effort and considerable resources to achieve.

Considering the housing crisis we are experiencing and the additional challenges in finding and developing appropriate housing for people with behavioral health disorders, it is critical to continue to invest in housing and expedite the funding out to communities as efficiently as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of replenishing the Housing for Mental Health Fund through lottery bond authorization in HB 5030.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Ramirez

Cheryl L. Ramirez
Director, AOCMHP