

Senate Committee on Health Care

February 5, 2020

RE: Testimony on SB 1552

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of OCHIN, I write to voice our strong support of Senate Bill 1552 that will support Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.

As a not for profit organization technology and research collaborative founded 20 years ago in Oregon to support underserved communities throughout the state, we are patently aware of the difference health centers make in improving the lives of this population. One area where there is constant need is mental and behavioral health care. Oregon has been hit hard by behavioral health epidemics, including addiction, deaths of despair, and untreated mental health conditions, especially for those living below the poverty level. Oregon's 12 Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) have made an enormous impact for vulnerable Oregonians suffering from these conditions across the state by increasing mental health and addiction service access by 15%.

CCBHCs advocate for and deliver 24/7 crisis response, care coordination, and care collaboration for the state's most complex patients, often being served by the safety net. Those who receive treatment through this program can forego emergency care, receive ongoing treatment, and see improved health outcomes. CCHBC also creates jobs, helps to overcome the mental health provider shortage, and helps patients see providers sooner.

By passing SB 1552 and investing \$15 million, Oregon can draw down a federal 4:1 match, or an additional \$62 million, and prevent shrinkage and possible closure of this critical program. Without state and federal funding, this program will cease to exist, which will vastly reduce services to Oregon's already underserved safety net population.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 1552. OCHIN believes that expanding CCBHCs will continue to help Oregonians in need, and we respectfully urge you to vote yes on this critical legislation to increase funding to this program.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Stoll
EVP, Government Relations and Public Affairs