



ALEX CUYLER

Intergovernmental Relations Manager
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DATE: March 2, 2021
TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Services
RE: HB 5024, relating to the financial administration of the Oregon Health Authority

Dear Co-Chair Lieber, Co-Chair Nosse, and Members of the Subcommittee:

In that I have previously submitted testimony on HB 5024 as it pertains to Public Health, I want to be clear that this document address Behavioral Health service delivery.

Lane County has examined the Governor's Recommended Budget, and we make the following findings:

- We support the Oregon Health Authorities policy option package for Aid and Assist. Lane County has long been a “high sending” county and continues to be involved with policy discussions regarding how to better ensure that the interplay that exists between courts, local supervisory authorities, prosecutors and defense attorney’s, and the mental health program functions without error, and with an eye towards the best outcome for the defendant. The POP includes \$19.3M to support community restoration. As a relatively new system, these funds will help to evolve the necessary infrastructure which includes more locally based evaluators and facilities that provide secure beds in addition to the staff required at the county level to ensure care coordination.
- We ask that the Subcommittee recommend sufficient funding to provide the necessary federal match which will ensure the operations of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in Oregon. In Lane County, the CCBHC was housed at PeaceHealth Hospital, which significantly has been a partner with Lane County to identify “high-utilizers” of emergency departments, the jail, and behavioral health services. Once identified, we collectively work to provide housing for these individuals and when successful have seen their utilization of these mostly public services drop significantly.
- Housing supports for those with behavioral health issues are a key element that we believe the Governor’s Recommended Budget did not address adequately. We point to the recommendation for a 50% reduction to the Choice Program, specifically. That program assists our housing efforts, and our experience with frequent users is that housing supports have an enormous return on investment.
- Finally, we are disappointed that the Oregon Health Authority has apparently not been able to finalize the caseload forecasting work that was outlined in a budget note within SB 5525, the 19-21 budget bill for the Oregon Health Department. Lane County participated in several of those meetings and noted the potential which existed for data sharing conversations between the Health Authority and the Judicial Department in particular to better establish data related to Aid and Assist and Community Restoration. That forecasting issue appears to have not been solved, further prolonging and exacerbating cuts that we experienced in 19-21. We ask that the Subcommittee specifically address this with the Health Authority.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY ALEX CUYLER, LANE COUNTY
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS MANAGER