



Testimony in support of HB 2086 – Investing in the Community-based Behavioral Health System

March 17, 2021

Dear Chair Sanchez, Co-Chairs Nosse and Moore-Green, Members of the BH Committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), representing CMHPs statewide, who manage the local behavioral health safety net for their communities and provide a wide array of services for people who are Medicaid eligible, uninsured or underinsured, we support HB 2086, to enhance behavioral health treatment services and supports in the community. We understand there are -1 amendments in the works, which we also support based on the summary that has been shared with us.

We appreciate the work of the Governor's Behavioral Health Advisory Council and were glad to see investment priorities for tribal-based programs, Aid and Assist funding for community restoration and SRTF capacity, low barrier housing, and co-occurring disorder treatment. Additionally, we are encouraged to see the increased attention on our most important commodity, our behavioral health workforce, in this legislation and in other bills. The best way to value these workers is to pay them living wages.

We also agree with repealing SB 944, a well-intended, but misguided bill that AOCMHP opposed in 2017, and support using a new method of tracking treatment demand and initiating a real time bed registry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2086 with amendments.

Sincerely,

Cherryl L. Ramirez
Director, AOCMHP