

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and members of the committee,

My name is Timothy Herd and I am part of the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative (SHOI). SHOI is an OHSU program that offers full tuition and fees to a select number of students in exchange for at least five years of medical service in a rural or underserved part of Oregon.

I grew up in the Rockwood district of Portland and earned an undergraduate degree in Ministry from Corban University in Salem, OR. After university, while working with various churches in Portland and Gresham I helped start a non-profit that offers training/support to families actively involved in international adoptions. As my role changed with them I missed working directly with families, so I started looking into a career in medicine. I moved to Lebanon, OR to do post-bacc. work at OSU for pre-med requirements. While there, I was able to work in a pediatric clinic that saw a majority medicaid patients. Having grown up in Portland I anticipated always living in an urban setting. After working with this patient population and setting I loved the different type of care it made possible. I would see children in the clinic on Wednesday, and then see them again on the youth soccer field that Saturday. It allowed for better physician-patient relationships and trust building. The physicians knew the teachers, sports coaches, and other resource providers well, and were able to coordinate care in ways that I loved, but they lack the resources of the bigger cities. I plan to return to rural Oregon to continue working with this population as a general pediatric in the future. I have a passion for youth mentoring and intend to work with and help develop mentorship programs moving forward as these communities have such a need for these services amongst many others. I can't wait to see where I land in rural Oregon, and start being able to invest in the families and community.

Rural and underserved areas lack access to care, and without the SHOI program, it would be nearly impossible for underpopulated and underserved areas to attract talented doctors. Coupled with the cost of medical school and the sometimes lower pay in these areas, taking jobs in rural or underserved areas without financial assistance would result in significant debt for providers.

There are hundreds of qualified Oregonians who are willing to serve in rural and underserved Oregon, but if the funding for SHOI is cut, then we know that these areas of our state will feel the effects. As we begin our road to recovery from the pandemic, we cannot afford to leave underserved populations behind.

We urge you to fully fund the Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative so we can continue to serve some of the communities that need it the most.

Sincerely,

Timothy James Herd, Graduating in: 2023