

February 24, 2021

# MMC

## Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium

- Mayor Lacey Beaty**  
City of Beaverton
- Mayor Brian Hodson**  
City of Canby
- Mayor Jeffrey Dalin**  
City of Cornelius
- Mayor Gery Schirado**  
City of Durham
- Mayor Brian Cooper**  
City of Fairview
- Mayor Peter Truax**  
City of Forest Grove
- Mayor Tammy Stempel**  
City of Gladstone
- Mayor Travis Stovall**  
City of Gresham
- Mayor Tom Ellis**  
City of Happy Valley
- Mayor Steve Callaway**  
City of Hillsboro
- Mayor Ken Gibson**  
City of King City
- Mayor Joe Buck**  
City of Lake Oswego
- Mayor Mark Hardie**  
City of Maywood Park
- Mayor Mark Gamba**  
City of Milwaukie
- Mayor Teri Lenahan**  
City of North Plains
- Mayor Ted Wheeler**  
City of Portland
- Mayor Walt Williams**  
City of Rivergrove
- Mayor Keith Mays**  
City of Sherwood
- Mayor Jason Snider**  
City of Tigard
- Mayor Randy Lauer**  
City of Troutdale
- Mayor Frank Bubenik**  
City of Tualatin
- Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle**  
City of Vancouver (ex officio)
- Mayor Jules Walters**  
City of West Linn
- Mayor Julie Fitzgerald**  
City of Wilsonville
- Mayor Scott Harden**  
City of Wood Village

Representative Tawna Sanchez, Chair  
Representative Raquel Moore-Green, Vice-Chair  
Representative Rob Nosse, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Behavioral Health

Re: Support for HB 2417

Dear Chair Sanchez, Vice-Chair Moore-Green, Vice-Chair Nosse and  
Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-five cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its support for HB 2417, which would require the Department of Human Services to create a program to provide matching grants to cities or counties to operate mobile crisis intervention teams.

Oregon is facing a behavioral health crisis. Cities are not providers of behavioral health services, but MMC cities see the impact of this crisis in the growing number of homeless Oregonians who are suffering from mental health and addiction issues. The state's underfunded behavioral health system also manifests itself in increased demand for emergency and police services in our cities. Our police departments do not have the capacity, resources or training to effectively respond to the volume of mental health crises occurring in our cities, and the mayors of the MMC are concerned about the over-policing of our homeless residents. Individuals in crisis often need medical care and access to services that our criminal justice system is not well-equipped to provide.

Improving access to mental health care and decriminalizing homelessness have long been top priorities for the MMC. For this reason, the MMC supports HB 2417 and the expansion of programs like CAHOOTS in communities across Oregon. When our residents are suffering from behavioral health crises, they deserve the humane treatment and expert care that crisis intervention teams can provide.

The MMC urges the committee's support for HB 2417 and appreciates the efforts made by the Oregon Legislature to improve care for Oregonians struggling with behavioral health issues. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium