

March 1, 2021

Attn: Members of the House Behavioral Health Committee

Members of the House Behavioral Health Committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC), representing Oregon's 36 county governments, I request your support for HB 3123, the bill to continue the state's investment in Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs). CCBHCs were created to improve access to behavioral health and substance use disorder treatments for Oregonians, regardless of their ability to pay for the services, and regardless of whether the State provides medicaid coverage for those services.

In 2016, Oregon was one of eight states granted federal awards to establish CCHBCs as a result of the federal Excellence in Mental Health Act.

CCBHCs seek to provide integrated health services that focus on stabilizing those with severe mental illnesses and addictions, through trauma-informed and wellness-based care. Currently, there are CCBHCs in Columbia, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Multnomah, Wallowa, Wasco, Washington, and Yamhill counties.

CCBHCs are required to provide core integrated behavioral health services, including:

- Crisis mental health services including 24-hour mobile crisis teams, emergency crisis intervention, and crisis stabilization
- Patient-centered treatment planning
- Outpatient mental health and substance use services
- Primary care screening and monitoring
- Targeted case-management
- Psychiatric rehabilitation services
- Peer support, counseling services, and family support services
- Connections with other providers and systems (criminal justice, foster care, child welfare, education, primary care, hospitals, etc.)

The federal grant award in 2016 was provided to 12 CCBHCs for a one year planning period, and in 2018, additional grant funding was provided for implementation of the program. Every year since 2018, the federal government has extended the demonstration period, where, in order to participate, states must provide matching funds, at a four-to-one rate (federal:state). In

the most recent federal stimulus package, the federal government approved the extension to continue through September 2023.

Oregon's current match for CCBHCs is authorized through the end of Oregon's fiscal biennium (July 2021). The program has saved millions of dollars on diverting those in crisis from the State Hospital and emergency departments across the state, and will continue to provide what is considered the gold standard of behavioral health treatments. While the State faces a severe budget deficit, there is no better time to leverage federal matching dollars to support the ongoing work of the CCBHCs, and to provide critical behavioral health services to Oregonians as our state faces several crises all at once. AOC enthusiastically supports HB 3123, and urges the committee to support passage of this bill.

Regards,

Lizzy Atwood Wills
Health and Human Services Legislative Affairs Manager
Association of Oregon Counties
latwoodwills@oregoncounties.org