



# Health Department

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February 2, 2022

Senate Committee on Health Care  
900 Court St. NE - Remote A  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: SB 1554 - Oregon Health Authority study of public health system response to COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Kennemer, and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to provide feedback on SB 1554.

Thank you for your deep interest in the COVID-19 pandemic response. Multnomah County agrees that it is imperative to outline potential system improvements that will help us to be better prepared to respond to the next emergency. We support the goals and spirit of SB1554 and we would like to highlight a few key considerations.

The extensive list of areas outlined in this bill for study are almost certainly the work of the next decade as opposed to the next two years. We continue to be in the midst of COVID-19 response and recovery. This study will be a large undertaking for any stakeholder in the COVID-19 response given all the different participants and entities involved. In particular it will take time and effort to fully understand how to improve our emergency response through a racial equity lens.

This bill notes that the focus of this study is on the public health system, however, it is imperative to account for the roles and influence of other entities, including but not limited to hospitals, health systems, coordinated care organizations, and elected officials. We urge you to consider the full context for the COVID-19 response in your proposed analysis.

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