



March 3, 2023

CareOregon Testimony Supporting SB 5511

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, Members of the Joint Committee:

CareOregon is a community non-profit organization serving over 500,000 Oregonians covered by the Oregon Health Plan. We have served Oregonians for nearly 30 years. CareOregon wholly owns two coordinated care organizations (CCOs), Jackson Care Connect and Columbia Pacific CCO. We are a founding member of Health Share of Oregon, managing an integrated community network and the behavioral health benefit for all Health Share of Oregon members. We also serve statewide through our tribal care coordination benefit.

Every day our organizations serve Oregon's most vulnerable. We do this with the recognition that total well-being includes housing and shelter. Supportive housing plays an important role for members who experience chronic homelessness and have acute needs.

From our work in the community, we have heard the need to increase and stabilize permanent supportive housing (PSH) capacity. Need far outweighs current resources.

We are pleased to see specific investments for PSH in the Governor's recommended budget. Specifically, CareOregon supports proposed investments to:

- **Expand PSH capacity to serve more Oregonians statewide** (\$130 million, Article XI-Q bonds)
- **Protect existing operations through a risk mitigation fund** (\$4.5 million, GF)

The CareOregon family is committed to working with local partners on these solutions. Here are two examples:

- In 2021 Jackson Care Connect's local governance board committed to housing as a top priority for the coordinated care organization and a survey of community leaders identified permanent supportive housing as a specific need. Jackson Care Connect is engaged with local community partners to support housing needs in the region, including through shelter and transitional housing development, and is actively discussing ways to grow PSH capacity.
- Housing has been a priority for Columbia Pacific CCO since 2019, and in 2020 its governing board created and funded a Regional Housing Impact Fund. Columbia Pacific and its risk-share participants have invested over \$3 million to increase affordable housing in Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook counties through this fund. These projects include unit creation and preservation for individuals with high behavioral health needs.

We urge your support of SB 5511.

Sincerely,

Kristina Narayan
CareOregon

