

March 6, 2023

Oregon State Legislature

Re: Resources for Rural Communities to Address Homelessness

Douglas County, like many small, rural communities, is facing a homeless crisis with limited resources and support. Communities located in the Balance of State/Rural Oregon Continuum of Care have been historically underfunded by the state and federal government. As a result, these communities have fewer service providers, a greater difficulty accessing scarce resources, and are unable to provide basic amenities due in large part to the threat of litigation.

Umpqua Health would like to offer its support for the proposed bills currently being considered by the House and Senate. These bills (Amendment -5 to SB 847-1, and a similar bill being introduced in the House which has not yet been assigned a bill number) will remove at least one major barrier by limiting liability associated with designated safe resting places or urban campgrounds located in communities within Balance of State/Rural Oregon Balance of State Continuum of Care. Limiting liability will provide greater opportunity for these communities to provide basic amenities to their unhoused residents living outside by removing the serious financial concern associated with lawsuits.

On behalf of Umpqua Health and small, rural communities throughout Oregon, we strongly urge you to approve these bills to help address this critical need.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Brent Eichman, MBA, CHFP
Chief Executive Officer
Umpqua Health, LLC