

March 23, 2023

To the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services  
Re: SB5525

We are writing in a spirit of deep appreciation for everything that you do for community members impacted by health inequities in Oregon. We are The UPRISE Collective, a BIPOC organization that supports community members with targeted identities to engage in social uplift within our own communities. Our work in the area of Health Equity is centered in Disability Justice, both inside and outside of systems. We support community members in penetrating the bureaucracy of systems to help them get their needs met (including education on the SSI/SSD process, Narcan, and assistive technology access), and we support grassroots work on Emergency Preparedness in the Sick and Disabled community. Some of our most important work also includes creating spaces for Disabled community building, and Disabled joy.

We do our work in solidarity with OHA and the Community Health Equity Coalition (CHEC), made up of more than 80 community based organizations that uplift the needs of over 500,000 Oregonians.

We are grateful for Governor Kotek's support, and in tandem with the CHEC, request an investment of \$286 million above the current service level for the OHA Public Health Modernization Budget. This investment will allow OHA to continue funding projects like ours, allowing us to respond to the very real needs of Disabled Oregonians across the state. With the rise of inflation, along with the effects of the Covid pandemic, more community members than ever are qualifying as Disabled, and are in need of support to get their basic needs met. With continued funding, UPRISE will be able to expand programming to create more community spaces and continued education and advocacy efforts.

All of us are bound by the resources that we have, and that is a truth that we can't deny, but also are we bound by a long history of directing money and resources into targeted communities, and then taking it away because the funding has disappeared. Please help us not only to continue to support and uplift Sick and Disabled community members, but to engage in a type of reparation for generations of well-grounded mistrust in the very systems that are ostensibly put in place to help. With funding, UPRISE will continue to center Disabled resistance, while being able to compensate community members with lived experience to engage in skill sharing to support our collective survival, as well as paying our staff a thriving wage to build these programs based on community identified need.

Thank you for your consideration, and take care.

In Community and Solidarity  
The Team at The UPRISE Collective



Community Health Equity Coalition