



Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living
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2023 - 2025
Governor's Budget
STATE OF OREGON

Dear Co-Chairs Campos & Valderrama and Members of the Joint Human Services Ways & Means Committee:

I am Dr. Jonathan Wilson, Chief Research Officer, for Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL).

Over the past year, EOCIL has provided much needed public health-related services to traditionally underserved and unserved members of our community. Our services consisted of MonkeyPox planning and response, distribution of food and hygienic products, water delivery, vaccine outreach and coordination, wraparound support, service and resource navigation, mental health and wellness counseling and programs, supporting tobacco cessation initiatives, operating heating and cooling stations, transportation services, and a community-wide needs assessment geared at highlighting root causes of inequity in the Oregon. The positive impact organizations like EOCIL have had on their communities, especially during times of uncertainty and tumult, is essential for bridging the service and resource gaps so many of our friends and families experience.

Current Service Level (CSL) is \$60.6 Million for OHA's Public Health Modernization Budget

We are grateful that the Governor is proposing to add an ADDITIONAL \$50 million to the Public Health Modernization Budget. However, it is not enough to meet the very real needs of marginalized community members that OHA has been made aware of.

OHA understands the importance of Health Equity work - Across public health issues, communities of color, tribal communities, disability communities, rural

communities and communities at the intersections of other identities experience greater health inequities. As integral partners in the public health systems, community-based organizations work to ensure that public health serves those who experience greater health risks. Community-based organizations provide local, culturally specific and linguistically responsive services to eliminate health inequities. CBOs are trusted within their communities to provide culturally-specific health communications, were essential partners during the COVID pandemic response, and continue to deliver public health emergency response planning. An additional investment of \$100M to advance the health equity efforts of CBOs across Oregon is an essential part of the additional Public Health Modernization investment of \$286M that OHA has requested.

The Community Health Equity Coalition which represents more than 70 Community-Based Organizations, provides a wide-range of culturally and linguistically responsive services to more than 500,000 marginalized Oregonians across the state.

Thank you for your consideration of this important investment in Oregonian's facing health disparities.

Sincerely,

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