



Samoa Pacific Development Corporation

March 21, 2023

Dear Senate Committee:

My name is Jacinta Galea'i, and I support SB 5525. I serve as the Executive Director of Samoa Pacific Development Corporation, which serves Samoans and Pacific Islanders in Oregon through educational and economic resources and cultural empowerment.

We are a member of the Community Health Equity Coalition made up of more than 80 community-based organizations who are collectively responding to the public health needs of more than 500,000 Oregonians.

During the pandemic, Pacific Islander was one of the hardest hit communities in Oregon. With the funding from OHA's CBO Equity grant, we were able to hire four Community Health Workers, one in Wasco County, two in Jackson County and one in Multnomah County to help Pacific Islanders be better prepared for the next crisis that hits our state.

We are grateful that the current service level funding for Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Modernization Budget and some additional funding was included in the Governor's proposed budget. However, we request investment of \$286M above current service level for OHA Public Health Modernization Budget, which includes \$100M for CBOs who are a lifeline to Oregon's most diverse and marginalized populations across the state.

Like our partner CBOs, we are trusted within our community to provide culturally-specific health communications and were essential partners during the COVID pandemic response, and continued 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.**

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

Jacinta Galea'i, PhD
Executive Director
Samoa Pacific Development Corporation

7820 NE Holman St. Ste - B1
Portland, OR 97218
(503) 720-1989; (360) 360-8754
jacinta@samoapdx.org
<https://www.samoapdx.org/>