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DATE: April 14, 2023

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Adam Shanks, Administrative Lieutenant

RE: SUPPORT SENATE BILL 5506

Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez, and Members of the Committee

My name is Adam Shanks, I am the Administrative Lieutenant with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. In 2020, we implemented a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program with funding received from the IMPACTS Grant process administered by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission. LEAD is a collaborative community safety effort that offers law enforcement a credible alternative to booking people into jail for low level criminal activity stemming from social determinants of health issues. Law enforcement may also divert people through social referrals for clients demonstrating non-criminal behavior leading to multiple police contacts.

Our LEAD program allows law enforcement officers in the field to connect people directly to navigation services for client assessments, crisis response, and long-term wrap-around services. By working with law enforcement to intercept individuals and connect them to community-based interventions prior to arrest, LEAD effectively disrupts the cycling of individuals with behavioral health challenges through our criminal legal system and uses a low barrier, harm reduction-based model of care to help participants work toward achieving stability in the community.

The IMPACTS program provides funding for navigator salaries and ancillary costs such as communication devices, motel rooms, extended stay housing, transportation costs, obtaining state identification, applying for healthcare, utility costs and many other needs to help overcome barriers for program participants.

Our Lincoln County LEAD program is a resource available to all Lincoln County law enforcement agencies including local, county, and state police agencies. To date, LEAD has served over 60 clients resulting in positive impacts by reducing jail bookings, calls for service for our local law enforcement agencies, and increased supports for high utilizer clients of the criminal justice system in Lincoln County.

If approved, this funding will continue to provide program development and opportunities for community improvement and access to community-based treatment, supports, and services across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony before you.