



February 6, 2024

TO: Chair Nosse, members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health & Health Care

FROM: Association of Oregon Counties Legislative Affairs Manager, Jessica Pratt

RE: Support HB 4092

Dear Chair Nosse and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Counties, representing Oregon's county governments, I am writing to urge your support for HB 4092, to aid the state and counties in responding to our shared behavioral health and homelessness emergencies and ensure the integrity of the state's behavioral health safety net.

Effective emergency response to our homelessness and drug crises requires increased local mental health and addiction treatment capacity and **we need to know how much capacity our public investments in those services will buy**. HB 4092 will establish a current cost assessment of the mental health and addictions services which counties, through their Community Mental Health Programs, are statutorily mandated to provide.

Recent provider surveys and outcomes suggest that worker time spent on non-clinical duties can amount to more than 40% of a provider's day (up to 60% in some instances), due to a decades-long accumulation of outdated and duplicative administrative burdens in statute and administrative rule. **Reducing those unnecessary burdens will immediately increase Oregon's behavioral health workforce capacity**. HB 4092 provides the accountability and technical assistance needed to do that.

Despite diligent efforts by a comprehensive coalition of stakeholders to solve these problems on our own, it is now clear that without the legislative oversight and accountability of HB 4092, this administrative burden and loss of treatment capacity will continue unchecked.

AOC urges your support for HB 4092 and we thank you for your support for state-county shared services.

Jessica Pratt
Legislative Affairs Manager
Association of Oregon Counties