



Fora Health

TREATMENT & RECOVERY

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Chief Executive Officer

Fora Health

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Oregon State Legislature

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

Chair Campos

900 Court Street NE

Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and Members of the Committee,

I support the Governor's recommended investment in Behavioral Health services in the 2025-2027 biennium. I am the CEO of Fora Health, a behavioral health treatment provider in Southeast Portland that operates a full continuum of substance use disorder treatment services, from withdrawal management and residential to outpatient treatment. I have worked in the behavioral health field for over 30 years in various roles and I am a person with over 31 years of recovery from a substance use disorder. From this perspective, I can unequivocally say that the State of Oregon desperately needs the investments that the Governor has proposed.

Right now, Fora Health has a waitlist for our residential treatment services. Residential treatment is the highest level of care for people that are experiencing substantial acuity. Asking people to wait for months to access that level of care is unreasonable and often results in tragic outcomes. The \$90M the Governor has put forward for residential services is important for opening up capacity and making it possible for more

people to get the care they need, when they need it. It is imperative that those who have taken the step to seek help have access to it without delay.

Investments in Community Mental Health Programs, Behavioral Health Resource Networks, and Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics are all critical. We need full funding of the Medicaid program, and navigators to help people access care. Investments in social determinants of health like healthy food and safe housing are foundational. We need peer services, resources for deflection and diversion programs, and street outreach. We also need to think and plan holistically. We treat our spectrum of housing, our state continuum of care, and each of our counties and districts as separate systems.

I urge your support of both the Behavioral Health and Medicaid Budgets and urge you to push for unity in the implementation of these investments. Without it, we will continue to see our communities ravaged by substance use, creating deleterious impacts on public safety, education and public health. If we put in the time to align coordination of the investments and the delivery of the care we will make the State of Oregon a safer and healthier place for all Oregonians.