



February 11, 2025

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

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

RE: Fiscal and operational impact to local public health programs of HB 2943

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 share significant implementation challenges for local public health programs if HB 2943 were to pass as written.

County boards of commissioners are the Local Public Health Authority, with the duty to administer and enforce Oregon's public health laws and provide oversight and accountability of services.

Counties partner with the Oregon Public Health Division to provide services that help our communities thrive: communicable disease prevention and response; health promotion like maternal and child home health visits and substance use prevention; and environmental health services like monitoring water quality, food safety, and disaster preparedness. These services improve the quality of life in our communities and the wellbeing of all Oregonians.

The intent of HB 2943 to increase HIV and syphilis screening, investigation and outreach to Oregonians is both good and timely. However, according to Oregon's public health experts, because of the complex nature of syphilis infection, the methodology articulated in the bill will result in costly false positive results. These false positives would cause unnecessary distress to those individuals and reduce local public health program capacity to investigate and provide outreach to individuals with true positive communicable disease screening results. We currently estimate that HB 2943 as written



will have a \$5 million fiscal impact to local public health programs with a questionable community health return on investment.

We look forward to partnering with you and public health advocates this session to increase local public health program capacity to perform evidence-based communicable disease prevention and response across Oregon.

Jessica Pratt  
Legislative Affairs Manager  
Association of Oregon Counties