



February 14, 2025

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Please visit:
<https://www.deschutes.org/health/page/public-health-advisory-board>



Re: House Bill 5025 – Support Additional Public Health Modernization Funding

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Campos and Representative Valderrama and Members of the Joint Subcommittee On Human Services:

The Deschutes County Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) strongly supports increased funding for Public Health Modernization to be included in House Bill 5025. Through this funding, Deschutes County Public Health has had the capacity to sustain and enhance core public health programs such as communicable disease prevention, emergency preparedness, environmental health outreach, epidemiology, and risk communications. To close the investment gap needed to maintain critical core public health programs in Oregon, we request an additional \$25 million in the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) budget for Public Health Modernization.

Central Oregon Counties have worked collaboratively for over six years to implement Modernization funded programs to improve communicable disease prevention, make health and disease data available to the public, and help the public respond to smoke and wildfire. In fact, Public Health Modernization funding made it possible for Deschutes County Communicable Disease staff to respond to 73 outbreaks in 2024 in the Tri-County. Currently, there is only an additional \$2 million proposed this biennium for Public Health Modernization in the OHA budget. At this level of funding, Deschutes County may be forced to scale back outbreak response efforts, reduce public health education on wildfire smoke and other environmental risks, and limit support for emerging health concerns. These reductions could have long-term consequences for the well-being of our community and across Oregon.

We respectfully urge your support for an additional \$25 million in Public Health Modernization funding in House Bill 5025 to sustain these essential services.

Sincerely,

Rob Ross

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Colleen Sinsky

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To promote and protect the health and safety of our community.

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