



**Address:** 4181 E Street, Springfield, OR 97478  
**Phone:** 541-343-5256  
**Email:** [info@arclane.org](mailto:info@arclane.org)  
**Web:** [www.arclane.org](http://www.arclane.org)

February 18, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Human Services Ways & Means Committee:

My name is Laura Dahill, and I am the director of marketing and communications for The Arc Lane County, a nonprofit agency that supports people who experience developmental disabilities in Lane County.

Oregon's public health system includes federal, state, counties and local agencies, private organizations, community-based organizations, and other partners. The Arc Lane County is one of the 195 community-based organizations that receive Public Health Modernization funding through the Oregon Health Authority.

As integral partners in the public health systems, community-based organizations (CBOs) work to minimize health risks and improve health outcomes. Community-based organizations strengthen the state's capacity to respond to emerging issues that threaten the health of Oregonians. CBOs are trusted within their local communities and are uniquely positioned to reach rural community members, people with disabilities, tribal members and other culturally specific groups who are at greater risk of health disparities.

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) face significant challenges in emergency preparedness and response, leading to a disproportionate negative impact during disasters. As a result of our Public Health Modernization work, The Arc Lane County is working to address these health issues by focusing on accessible and individualized approaches to emergency preparedness.

Specifically, The Arc is using CMIST emergency framework and the Cognitopia web-based software suite to support people with I/DD in emergency preparedness. The CMIST emergency framework, developed for emergency planning and response, addresses functional needs in key areas like communication, maintaining health, independence, support, safety, self-determination, and transportation (Fordham, 2022). Cognitopia is an executive functioning software tool designed to increase accessibility and independence for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

By bridging gaps in emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities, leveraging technology and actively involving the community in the development of personalized emergency plans, we aspire to create a more resilient community prepared to face emergencies. OHA's Current Public Health Modernization Budget is \$110M General Fund and represents essential funding for Local Public Health Authorities, Tribal, OHA and community-based organizations like ours who are working in partnership with the State. Since the pandemic, the



**Address:** 4181 E Street, Springfield, OR 97478  
**Phone:** 541-343-5256  
**Email:** [info@arclane.org](mailto:info@arclane.org)  
**Web:** [www.arclane.org](http://www.arclane.org)

public health system has been building up the capacity to address public health needs throughout the state, but there is a great deal more work to be done as threats to our health and well-being persist.

**We are requesting an additional investment of \$25M into public health modernization budget.** The additional \$2M proposed in the Governor's recommended budget does not provide the level of funding that is truly needed to address the unmet public health needs that exist in our state. For example, individuals with disabilities are often ill-prepared for emergencies, contributing to higher injury and fatality rates during disasters (Adams, 2019; Smith, 2009).

Thank you for your consideration of this important investment in Oregon's public health capacity, and for the opportunity to share the work we are doing in communities across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Laura Dahill'.

Laura Dahill,  
The Arc Lane County