



Written Testimony House Bill 5025
**OHA Public Health Modernization
Budget Support Full Funding with
\$25M additional investment.**

February 19, 2025

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

My name is Cheryl Cisneros, Executive Director of Creating Opportunities, a Community-Based Organization supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities, their families, and communities in Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties.

Oregon's public health system includes federal, state, counties and local agencies, private organizations, community-based organizations, and other partners. Our organization represents one of the 195 community-based organizations that receives Public Health Modernization funding through the Oregon Health Authority.

Our public health work has been focused on providing accessible emergency preparedness information to people with developmental disabilities and their families and support workers through a series of activities, including an interactive Safety Superhero Event, an online training presentation featuring a video of self-advocate youth discussing emergency preparedness at home, inclusive fire station pop-up events in several rural communities including disability awareness training to firefighters, a social media campaign to inform promote the utilization of emergency registries, and a full day Safe & Secure Summit that provided vital safety information to more than 150 attendees.

As integral partners in the public health systems, community-based organizations 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. As a result of our funded work, families have reported that they are better prepared for public health emergencies, including extreme weather events.

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 public health system has been building up the capacity 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 in the 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 need to build community resiliency when public health emergencies occur.

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.

Cheryl Cisneros, Executive Director – Creating Opportunities

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Member of CHEC - Community Health Equity Coalition - Representing dozens of Community-Based Organizations who are an integral part of Oregon's Public Health System