



1441 N.E. 10th Ave., Payette, ID 83661

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January 27, 2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety:

Valley Family Health Care supports legislative funding for a new courthouse to support the community of Malheur County.

Valley Family Health Care is a federally qualified health clinic which serves nearly 22,000 patients each year with the majority of those patients coming from and being served in Malheur County. Valley Family provides medical, dental, nutrition and behavioral health services in Vale, Nyssa, and Ontario at our clinic sites as well as the outlying areas within Malheur County with our mobile access care unit.

Nearly half of the patients supported by Valley Family utilize Medicaid for obtaining health services which is understandable given the high levels of poverty within Malheur County. With such a high level of poverty it is difficult for ongoing investments in basic community infrastructure for facilities such as our local courthouse.

The Malheur County Court staff and leadership have worked very hard to utilize the existing courthouse facility in a way that treats our entire community with respect and dignity, but size and age of the facility makes it increasingly difficult to do (Valley Family has similar obstacles with our aged facilities which make it difficult to provide modern technology for patient care and rooms to accommodate larger patients and larger families). A modern courthouse of an appropriate size would give the members of our community the respect they should be afforded whether it be in access to appropriate technology (which impacts translation services as an example) as well as private and appropriate space needed for people using courthouse services.

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As the provider of medical care for adults-in-custody at the Malheur County Jail, Valley Family understands the effect of not having sufficient courthouse capacity to move cases through in a timely manner requiring longer jail stays which prevents inmates from accessing medical care in the community.

Malheur County is full of wonderful community members that appreciate living in a rural environment for many reasons. That lifestyle decision should not result in the inability of our community members to access modern, safe and appropriate community infrastructure such as an accessible justice system. Valley Family appreciates your consideration of support for funding for construction of a new courthouse in Malheur County.

Sincerely,

Ken Hart, CEO
Valley Family Health Care

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