



February 26, 2025

Re: Support for SB 530

Hello Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Annie Valtierra-Sanchez, and I am the Director of the Regional Health Equity Coalition of Southern Oregon, serving Jackson and Josephine Counties. I urge your strong support for Senate Bill 530.

Strengthening Health Equity Through Sustainable Funding

Regional Health Equity Coalitions (RHECs) serve as critical, community-led organizations dedicated to addressing health disparities and advancing equity at the policy, systems, and environmental levels. SB 530 ensures that RHECs remain financially stable and effective by requiring the Oregon Health Authority to adjust grant funding for inflation annually. This adjustment is essential to sustaining the vital work of these coalitions and ensuring that resources keep pace with rising costs.

Why SB 530 Matters

1. **Ensuring Financial Sustainability** – Without inflationary adjustments, RHECs face budget challenges that limit their ability to deliver essential services, support staff, and respond to emerging health crises. By indexing grant funding to the cost of doing business, SB 530 ensures RHECs can maintain their impact over time.
2. **Strengthening Community-Led Solutions** – RHECs are uniquely positioned to address systemic health inequities by centering the voices of priority populations, including communities of color, immigrants, low-income individuals, and those historically marginalized in healthcare systems. Adequate and predictable funding ensures these coalitions can continue developing culturally specific, community-driven solutions.
3. **Maximizing Impact and Efficiency** – A well-resourced RHEC network means more proactive, cost-effective interventions that reduce health disparities before they escalate into costly public health emergencies. By stabilizing funding, SB

530 protects the state's investment in health equity and prevents gaps in essential services.

RHECs in Action: A Proven Model

- **COVID-19 Response** – RHECs played a critical role in ensuring equitable access to vaccines, testing, and public health information for marginalized communities.
- **Wildfire Recovery** – Following the devastating Almeda and Obenchain fires, SO Health-E provided direct housing support to low-income families, demonstrating the coalition's ability to mobilize quickly in crisis response.
- **Community Advocacy and Policy Change** – RHECs have successfully influenced policies addressing social determinants of health, from language access in healthcare settings to culturally responsive mental health services.

Oregon Must Invest in Health Equity for the Long Term

By passing SB 530, Oregon ensures that RHECs can continue their vital work without the constant threat of funding shortfalls.

I urge you to support SB 530 to sustain the progress we've made and build a healthier, more equitable Oregon for all. Thank you for your time and leadership.

Annie Valtierra-Sanchez,



Director at SO Health-E, the Regional Health Equity Coalition of Southern Oregon