

“Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of SB 528. My name is Doris Kiragu, and I am a Care Coordination Organization (CCO), employee of Advanced Health. SB 528 will provide critical resources to RHECs so they can continue reducing health inequities by identifying the most important issues impacting priority populations in underserved, rural regions of Oregon. By assessing these barriers through grassroots community engagement, they are able to uplift the voices of their communities to create effective solutions through policy and systems change. The expansion of RHECs will ensure that priority populations all over the state are getting their needs met.

I support this bill because the local Regional Health Equity Coalition in Coos Bay has been instrumental in serving as a bridge to support historically underserved and underrepresented populations. In 2023, Advanced Health helped fund the creation of the South Coast Health Equity Coalition (RHEC) because a part of the CCO’s framework is focused on community populations that have difficulty thriving due to low or no resources within the community. Since its inception, the South Coast Health Equity Coalition (RHEC), operates several workgroups such as Community Connection, Peer Learning Circle and Resource Sharing and several more. The South Coast Health Equity Coalition works as a hub of knowledge for populations interested in food resources, language translators and healthcare advocates for people in the LGBT+ community. In rural Oregon, this RHEC is critical for the betterment of its community.

This resource is vital to the community and these resources will allow for an immediate increase in Regional Health Equity Coalitions capacity to support them. I urge you to vote yes on SB 528.”

Thank you,

Doris Kiragu