

Submitter: Denise Hughes-Tafen
On Behalf Of: Linn Benton Lincoln Health Equity Alliance
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB530

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

My name is Denise Hughes-Tafen and I am writing to express my support for SB 530. I live in Corvallis, Oregon and I often participate in the activities organized by the Linn Benton Lincoln Health Equity Alliance. SB 530 is essential for ensuring that RHECs can continue their important work in reducing health inequities by providing the necessary funding and resources to meet the needs of underserved communities. This bill will also provide annual budgeted inflation adjustments to RHEC funding, ensuring that the organizations can keep up with rising costs and continue providing the services that are so vital for community health.

I support this bill because it prioritizes underserved communities. A key marker of healthy communities is access for all to health resources. However access is still out of reach for rural communities and other historically marginalized communities. We do not live in a vacuum; our health is interdependent. Our communities can only be healthy if we all are healthy. As a member of family with many intersectionalities - race, disability, nationality- I want to ensure that my children and other children and families like mine have access to the resources needed to be healthy. As an educator and a community member I think this is fundamental. Linn Benton Lincoln Health Equity Alliance advocates for everyone. They engage in health education and promotion and they also support local organizations to actively improve health conditions for all community members. This is important work and it needs to have full financial support to be sustainable.

These resources will allow RHECs to continue to strengthen their capacity and extend their support to the communities who need it most. I urge you to vote yes on SB 530.

Thank you,
Denise Hughes-Tafen, Ph.D.
Corvallis, Oregon.