

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

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 530. My name is Angel Harris, and I have been a member of the Linn Benton Lincoln Health Equity Alliance (LBLHEA) since 2017, currently serving as a board member. SB 530 is essential to ensuring that Regional Health Equity Coalitions (RHECs) can continue their critical 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 inflation adjustments to RHEC funding, enabling these organizations to keep pace with rising costs while continuing to provide vital community health services.

I support this bill because RHECs are crucial to our communities, especially in the work they do for priority populations. At LBLHEA, we partner with communities, organizations, and individuals to create healthier environments through policy, systems, and environmental changes. Personally, LBLHEA has had a profound impact on my life. As a Black woman leader in my community, the organization has supported both me and the organization I lead in building our capacity to fulfill our mission. LBLHEA creates a space for community empowerment, working directly with health departments and coordinated care organizations.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has set a goal to eliminate health disparities in the state by 2030. These disparities contribute to higher rates of illness and more severe health outcomes due to inequities in access to healthcare and quality of care. This bill will provide the resources needed for RHECs to continue strengthening their capacity and extending support to the communities that need it most.

I strongly urge you to vote in favor of SB 530.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Angel Harris, MSN, RN