



**Testimony in support of HB 5020  
Oregon Public Guardian investment**

March 4, 2025

Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, Members of the Subcommittee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for Oregon Public Guardian program investments in HB 5020, which permanently funds 5 limited duration positions. This staff capacity is important for the public behavioral health system as we serve significant numbers of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, many of whom need and are served well by public guardians. In fact, I understand that 61% of OPG's clients have severe and persistent mental illness.

Considering our urgent need to transition people out of the Oregon State Hospital and the looming Aid & Assist and Civil Commitment related lawsuits and fines, public guardianships are one important tool in the toolbox and are essential for some individuals to be able to live and recover in their communities.

Please support this critical investment for our public behavioral health system.

Sincerely,

Cherryl L. Ramirez  
Executive Director, AOCMHP