



Clatsop County

Board of Commissioners

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March 5, 2025

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support House Bill 2224 with the -3 Amendment

Chair Nosse and Members of the Committee,

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners strongly supports House Bill 2224 and the -3 Amendment. It takes an important step toward strengthening the partnership between counties and Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) by ensuring counties have a formal role in CCO governance. Additionally, HB 2224 establishes a clear framework for counties and CCOs to collaborate more effectively on public health and behavioral health initiatives.

Restoring Local Accountability and Governance

CCOs were originally designed to be locally governed and accountable to the communities they serve. However, without a formal requirement for county representation, many counties—including Clatsop—have struggled to ensure that local public health and behavioral health needs are meaningfully addressed in CCO decision-making. HB 2224 corrects this oversight by ensuring counties have a designated seat at the table, allowing local officials to directly contribute to shaping policies that impact their communities.

Addressing Public Health and Behavioral Health Needs Through Stronger County-CCO Partnerships

As a rural, coastal county, Clatsop faces significant health care challenges, including provider shortages, geographic barriers, and high rates of substance use disorder. The 2022 Clatsop County Community Health Assessment found that over 40% of the county's residents are on Medicaid, and there are ongoing gaps in behavioral health services.

Clatsop County values its strong working relationship with our regional CCO. We actively participate in the CCO's Clinical Advisory Panel, receive funding to support substance use harm reduction services, collaborate on the Resilient Clatsop County Initiative (a trauma-informed care program), and engage with the CCO on ways to expand access to Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) services through the Oregon Health Plan (OHP).

While this partnership has been beneficial, Clatsop County does not currently have a formal role in shaping CCO policies and priorities. HB 2224 would strengthen this collaboration by ensuring counties have a designated seat at the table, allowing for even greater coordination in addressing public health and behavioral health needs. By formalizing county representation in CCO governance, this bill would

help build on our existing relationship and ensure local decision-makers can contribute directly to shaping the programs that serve our community.

Enhancing Investment and Accountability for Public Funds

Local public health and behavioral health programs play a critical role in helping CCOs meet performance targets, yet there is currently no direct mechanism for CCOs to invest in these county-led efforts. CCOs manage billions in state and federal Medicaid funds intended to serve local residents, but county officials often lack oversight in how these funds are allocated. HB 2224 enhances financial transparency and accountability by giving counties a voice in decision-making while fostering stronger collaboration to meet shared health care goals.

Flexibility and Equity in County Representation

Some CCOs voluntarily include county representatives, while others do not, leading to inconsistencies in governance across the state. HB 2224 establishes a consistent standard by ensuring that counties have representation in CCO decision-making. The -3 Amendment further strengthens this approach by allowing counties to designate either a commissioner or another representative to serve on the CCO board. This flexibility is particularly important for rural counties like Clatsop. By allowing counties to determine the most appropriate representative, the bill ensures that local perspectives are effectively incorporated into CCO governance.

HB 2224 and the -3 Amendment provide a practical, equitable, and much-needed framework for strengthening county-CCO collaboration. By ensuring counties have a formal role in CCO governance, the bill enhances local accountability, improves coordination of public and behavioral health services, and fosters stronger partnerships to serve communities more effectively.

We appreciate your consideration of this important legislation and urge your support for HB 2224 with the -3 Amendment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Kujala, Chair
District 1



Anthony Huacuja, Commissioner
District 2



Pamela Wev, Commissioner
District 3



Courtney Bangs, Vice Chair
District 4



Lianne Thompson, Commissioner
District 5