

St. Charles

HEALTH SYSTEM

IN COLLABORATION WITH



OREGON
HEALTH & SCIENCE
University

March 22, 2025

Dear Honorable Oregon Legislators,

Oregon needs Family Physicians, to deliver primary care to all Oregonians. There are currently 205 open positions for Family Physicians across the state of Oregon. Many currently practicing Family Physicians are nearing retirement age. Family Physicians provide cradle to grave care, with many delivering babies, caring for pediatric patients, adults of all ages and finally, end of life care. When combined with population growth, if all Family Medicine graduates were to stay in Oregon, we would still be about 50% short of the needed number to maintain current levels of care.

We currently graduate 53 new board-eligible Family Physicians in Oregon each year, and over half stay in Oregon. The Oregon Residency Collaborative Alliance for Family Medicine (ORCA-FM) has been instrumental in assisting Family Medicine Residency Program Directors with training, support and expansion. Since 2020, we have expanded from 7 to 9 Family Medicine residencies, increased graduating residents from 37 to 53 and increased the total number of Family Medicine residents training in Oregon from 124 to 182. I joined this group while forming a new OHSU rural family medicine program in 2022 as a program director new to training and have benefited from the collaboration this group provides to help my program succeed.

ORCA-FM has also been essential for recruitment of new residents via a statewide virtual recruitment effort and the coordination at the Association of American Family Physicians National Conference medical student recruiting event annually. We have also advanced important resident training including Policy Scholars training for residents, and faculty development training.

I am currently an OHSU Family Medicine Program Director at St. Charles Madras, running a rural family medicine program and will be graduating my first class of three residents in 2027 with one resident already committed to practicing in rural Oregon.

I know, and see the value of residency collaborations, on recruitment, retention, advancing primary care in this state, and in maintaining high quality family medicine residencies across the state through our support of each other.

Please support SB 443 to fund ORCA-FM for 1.5 million dollars as this is vital in sustaining our efforts to increase excellent Family Physicians who will come, train, and stay in Oregon to care for our communities. Thank you for considering and please feel free to reach out if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jinnell Lewis, MD".

Jinnell Lewis, MD

OHSU Three Sisters RTP Program Director