



March 21, 2025

Chair Lew Frederick
Oregon State Senate
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Vice Chair Suzanne Weber
Oregon State Senate
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the committee:

We urge your support for SB 443, which will continue funding for the Oregon Residency Collaborative Alliance for Family Medicine.

We are members of the Committee on External Affairs of the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians, and we believe it is critical to continue to invest in Oregon's primary care workforce through this program.

The average age of OAFP's membership, like all of Oregon's primary care workforce, is getting higher. Over the last ten years, the number of retired members has grown much faster than our overall membership. National workforce data is clear that many physicians are choosing to retire earlier than previous generations.

Though the number of primary care providers in Oregon is growing, we aren't keeping pace with our needs. Wait times for new-patient appointments in too many parts of the state are long and getting longer. One OAFP member recently shared that his new-patient wait time was over one year. The problem of how to care for a growing and aging population is complex, and we need many solutions to address it.

The work that ORCA-FM does to support family medicine residencies across the state is an important part of that solution. More than half of family doctors stay in the state where they train, and those numbers are even higher for rural trainees. Creating community among the residency programs helps make it easier for faculty to provide excellent education.

After receiving state funding in 2023, ORCA-FM incorporated as a 501c3 nonprofit organization and hired its first Executive Director. They have launched programs to offer financial advising, contract support and negotiation education to residents to help ensure they get a great start as they enter the active workforce. The Collaborative's Oregon-wide recruitment support has helped Oregon's residency programs continue to attract talented residents even as other states are seeing significant declines. The Collaborative has also

supported the launch of the newest residency training site, the OHSU Three Sisters Rural Training Track in Madras, which accepted its first class of residents in July 2024.

We believe in the value and benefit of excellent primary care. Senate bill 443 will help Oregon continue to produce clinicians that will continue to provide that care. We urge you to vote yes.

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