March 24, 2025

Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
Relating to involuntary civil commitment and mental illness.

Clackamas County supports HB 2467 & SB 171.

Clackamas County supports legislation that reduces confusion around criteria for involuntary mental health services for individuals who are a danger to self or others or unable to meet their basic needs secondary to mental illness. Clarifying terminology and processes related to these services is essential for improving outcomes for those with the greatest need. The county is dedicated to supporting initiatives that more effectively meet the needs of these vulnerable populations.

The proposed amendments clarify processes to aid the courts and practitioners when they are evaluating individuals for civil commitment, ensuring more consistent and effective decision-making.

- It creates a separate definition for danger to self and danger to others with specific factors helpful for evaluation.
- It defines serious physical harm as it pertains to danger to self and to basic personal needs to protect people from catastrophic outcomes.
- It adds definition of "near future" to clarify how far into the future a court and clinicians may look when evaluating an individual for civil commitment.
- It adds factors the court may consider specific to danger to self and specific to danger to others.

Clarity and standardization in mental health investigations are essential for promoting safety, efficiency and the preservation of civil rights. By ensuring consistent transparent protocols, we eliminate confusion and variability of practice, leading to more accurate assessments and equitable outcomes. This approach is a vital step toward clarifying and standardizing civil commitment evaluation and investigation processes while ensuring that people suffering from mental illness receive the appropriate treatment and support.

We urge a "yes" vote on HB 2467 & SB 171.

Please contact Trent Wilson (twilson2@clackamas.us) for more information.