

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2059
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
MARCH 25, 2025**

**PRESENTED BY: CHANNA NEWELL, SENIOR STAFF COUNSEL FOR
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OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT**

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Javadi and Nelson, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. The Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) is neutral on House Bill 2059 and the –2 amendments and wants to call your attention to the ongoing need to focus behavioral health resources on people needing court-ordered behavioral health treatment.

OJD appreciates the intent of providing \$90 million in funding to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) for the purpose of the Residential Behavioral Health Capacity Program. It is important that adequate funding is provided to programs that increase the opportunities for residential behavioral health programs. OJD also commends the targeting of funds to programs that impact the areas of greatest need.

However, the residential behavioral health capacity study referenced as the baseline for these programs specifically called out the need for further analysis of the capacity needs for the forensic population as a priority need.¹ In its recommendations, the authors say, "Analysis of the current forensic population in relationship to mental health and substance abuse treatment and care needs while in State facilities, within the judicial system, community, residential or outpatient settings would be warranted. This population often suffer from a multitude of severe psychiatric, substance use and social problems and the interventions or treatment to effectively care for these individuals is scarce, therefore creating gaps within the care continuum for this population." (emphasis added).²

OJD recognizes the positive impact the -2 amendments could have on treatment beds for the forensic population, but, as the needs of that population have not been studied, nor an estimate of need developed, and since the forensic population is one of many factors that OHA must take into account when distributing these funds, OJD respectfully requests that as this measure moves through the budgetary process, a portion of this bill and associated funding be specifically targeted to the unmet needs of the forensic, court-mandated population.

¹ [Oregon Health Authority Behavioral Health Residential+ Facility Study](#), June 2024, page 20.

² *Id* page 121-22.