



April 3, 2025

Good afternoon Co-chairs Campos and Valderrama, members of the committee on the subcommittee on Human Services,

My name is Patricia Larios and I am a Direct Support Crisis Specialist at the Stabilization and Crisis Unit, I am also a board member of our Union AFSCME Local 1246. I've been at SACU for 7 years this month and joined the workforce because I have a passion advocating for people who cannot do so themselves. I write today in opposition to the proposed budget for the Oregon Department of Human Services as presented with a decrease in funding and the transition from state operated homes to private providers in the second year of the biennium.

I come from a diverse background working different jobs, but mental health seems to always pull me back. I've worked as a Personal Support Worker for a non profit organization. As a MHTT at The Oregon State Hospital. I've had the pleasure to experience the difference in how each one works, and the difference in the training provided.

When serving the non profit I noticed the lack of training for the staff and the lack of support for the families and the individuals being served. I remember the families telling me the struggle it was for them to find a good fit for their loved ones due to the lack of training the staff had and the turnover rate of the staff being so high. It's crucial for SACU to remain open at 100% because there is no placement out in the community that is set up to offer the support our clients need. We have extensive training and our homes are modified to fit their needs. Closing homes puts our individuals at risk of being homeless.

We urge this committee to carefully consider the impacts this has on the individuals served. Any funding cuts without a transparent plan about how individuals will get served in other settings puts their lives at risk. As a direct care worker, this proposed budget is reckless and has lacked clear communication to all parties involved.

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