



My name is Jason Unruh, and I am a Direct Support Crisis Specialist at the Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU). I've been at SACU for 11.5 years and joined the workforce because of a personal experience that left a lasting impact on me.

A close family friend had a son with significant developmental and behavioral challenges. No other agency was able—or willing—to provide the care and support he needed. But SACU stepped in when no one else could. I witnessed firsthand the compassion, structure, and specialized care SACU provided, which made a profound difference in his life and the lives of his loved ones. Seeing the quality of services he received inspired me to be part of that mission. It gave me the desire to work with individuals who have been forgotten or under-cared for—especially those living with the most challenging circumstances.

I am writing today in opposition to the proposed budget for the Oregon Department of Human Services, which includes a decrease in funding and the transition from state-operated homes to private providers in the second year of the biennium. SACU operates crisis homes, while private providers manage long-term homes. Oregon cannot afford to lose any crisis beds.

I want to highlight why maintaining SACU at 100% is not just important, but essential:

- SACU staff know the individuals we serve—their needs, behaviors, and care plans—and we have the training required to support them through high-acuity, crisis-level situations.
- For years, we've advocated for right-sizing SACU to better serve its purpose as a true crisis program. To do that, we must maintain current capacity, not cut it.
- There are currently no available community placements for many individuals already in SACU. If suitable options existed, transitions would already be underway.
- SACU effectively prepares individuals for transition into private placements, but delays are often caused by limited county services and a lack of community-based options. Slashing SACU's capacity will only deepen the housing and care crisis facing individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and mental health needs.
- SACU staff are more extensively trained than community placement staff and experience lower turnover—both critical factors when working with high-needs individuals in crisis.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to preserve SACU's funding and protect Oregon's most vulnerable citizens by keeping crisis services strong and fully staffed.

We are the safety net for those in crisis, and if we lose SACU beds, we lose the ability to catch them when they fall. Please stand with us and protect the vital services that SACU provides.

Sincerely,



Jason Unruh