



MAYOR KEITH WILSON

April 4, 2025

House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street SE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing today to share support HB 2467 with the -3 amendments making necessary and strategic changes to Oregon's civil commitment law.

There is a crisis occurring on our streets with citizens experiencing serious mental health and substance use disorders who are unable to access appropriate behavioral health care they need. Instead, too many people end up in hospital emergency rooms, living on the street, cycling in and out of the criminal justice system, and often, a combination of all three. Our first responders, including the City of Portland's public safety system, are routinely asked to step into roles better served by behavioral health providers. While there have been significant investments made in recent years to address the systemic need for more behavioral health services, including building out residential treatment capacity and strengthening the behavioral health workforce, there are still significant barriers for individuals experiencing severe mental illness. For many, however, the legal pathway to accessing care is rigid and too narrowly defined, resulting in people unnecessarily engaging with the criminal justice system or left to fend for themselves on the street.

The City of Portland previously served on the Chief Justice's Commitment to Change workgroup, formed in 2022 and tasked with making recommendations for improving the state's civil commitment system to better address the needs of Oregon's most vulnerable citizens. I appreciate that the City was included in that workgroup and am grateful that Chair Kropf, NAMI and others have continued this important work this session. HB 2467 with the -3 amendments makes strategic changes to Oregon's civil commitment laws to increase clarity and provide the

courts and clinicians with the tools they need to help address Oregon's acute behavioral health crisis.

As the City works to address the systemic problem of unsheltered homelessness, it is vital that the people with severe behavioral health needs are able access the care they need. We have a moral obligation to help people suffering on our streets.

Thank you for your consideration of these important changes to Oregon's civil commitment laws. I urge your support of HB 2467-3.

Sincerely,

Mayor Keith Wilson
City of Portland