



# Clatsop County

## Board of Commissioners

800 Exchange St., Suite 410  
Astoria, OR 97103  
(503) 325-1000 phone / (503) 325-8325 fax  
[www.ClatsopCounty.gov](http://www.ClatsopCounty.gov)

April 4, 2025

House Committee On Judiciary  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

### **RE: Support House Bill 2467-3 – Preventing Incarceration by Improving Access to Mental Health Services**

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the Committee,

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners strongly supports House Bill 2467-3 and urges its passage to establish clear, effective standards for evaluating dangerousness to self or others, enabling timely interventions that ensure the safety of all.

In Clatsop County, we see how people living with mental health challenges often fall through the cracks of the civil commitment system. Too many individuals are turned away from this system and end up incarcerated, where they must navigate the "aid and assist" process. This failure not only harms individuals but also places a significant burden on our local law enforcement and correctional facilities.

The current state of civil commitment in Oregon has led to a concerning trend of individuals experiencing severe mental health issues being diverted into the criminal justice system instead of receiving the treatment they need. From 1972 to 2020, the rate of civil commitments in Oregon has decreased significantly, dropping from 53.2 per 100,000 residents to just 9.2 per 100,000. Meanwhile, between 2000 and 2022, the percentage of individuals at the Oregon State Hospital who were civilly committed fell from 52% to 11.3%, while the percentage of individuals awaiting competency evaluations increased from 9.4% to 47.2%. This shift reflects a growing diversion of individuals from the civil commitment system, highlighting the need for reforms that provide treatment outside of the criminal justice system.

HB 2467 with the -3 amendment establishes clearer and more precise standards for evaluating dangerousness to oneself or others in the context of a civil commitment. This degree of clarity is essential, as it strikes a balanced between restoring the civil commitment process, protecting individual liberty, and reducing stigma. We believe it is far more effective—and less stigmatizing—for individuals living with mental health challenges to receive treatment through civil commitment before they are caught in the criminal justice system.

**For these reasons, we strongly urge your YES vote on HB 2467-3 to help ensure that people living with mental health challenges have access to the care they need before they are arrested or incarcerated, ultimately guiding them toward treatment and preventing unnecessary involvement in the justice system.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mark Kujala". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Kujala, Board Chair  
Clatsop County Board of Commissioners