



To: Chair Prozanski and Chair Kropf and member of the Committee

Re: Oppose SB 881

Date: 4/8/2025

Latino Network was founded in 1996 by advocates for the needs of the growing Latinx community in Multnomah County. Since then, these grassroots beginnings have evolved into a continuum of services that support Latinx individuals, families, and communities. Our programs currently focus on education, advocacy & leadership, health & wellness, economic justice, youth empowerment & violence prevention, and arts & culture, engaging nearly 11,000 community members throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties in the last year. We are the leading culturally-specific provider for Latinx youth, parent, and family services in the Portland area with the goal of serving the nearly 19% of Oregon's population who identify as Latinx or Hispanic.

Latino Network currently provides direct services to youth and families in Senate Districts 13-15 and 19-25 and House Districts 25, 26, 28, 29, 37, 40 and 42-50.

SB 881 is an unnecessary repeat of old mistakes that continue to conflate health care needs with criminality. The Criminal Justice Commission is a good government body that does good work within the realm of its expertise. Health care, reducing chronic illness, addressing social determinants of health, increasing access to hard to reach dual diagnosis services, peer support and counseling are not within the realm of the CJC's expertise. It would be deeply inappropriate to assign a state agency a body of work they hold no expertise in just because they have successfully run other grant programs that do align with their expertise.

Each and every time we attempt to treat a health care issue like a criminal issue we take major steps backwards within our healthcare system and their ability to reliably and responsibly address chronic illness and the social determinants that drive those illnesses.

Improvements are needed in granting and contracting all across the state. I had the honor of serving on the state task force for [Modernization Grants and Contracts](#), and Latino Network is supporting SB 602 this session to improve grant making and procurement practices. Looks to process improvement tools and strategies where they are needed. Do not abandon people's health, do not abandon a public health approach to a public health need, do not force an agency to take on work outside their space of expertise.

Thank you for your consideration, please vote No on SB 881.