

April 9, 2025

To: Members of the Joint Addiction and Community Safety Response

Re: Opposition to SB 881

Dear Co-Chairs Kropf and Prozanski, Vice Chair Mannix, members of the Committee,

My name is Meli Rose; I am the Director of Operations for Iron Tribe Network. We provide recovery housing, peer support, and family reunification services to individuals and families in transition to leading a life of recovery. Today, Iron Tribe Network operates 33 Family Recovery Homes across 8 Counties. I am submitting written testimony on behalf of our organization in opposition to SB 881.

As a BHRN provider of vital recovery services in Clackamas, Multnomah, Columbia, Marion and Tillamook Counties, we have worked with OHA throughout the process of being a BHRN provider, and believe this agency is best equipped to oversee the BHRN grantmaking process and is most responsive to provider inquiries and grant oversight needs. While we deeply respect the work of the CJC and its role in improving the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems, we oppose SB 881 because the CJC is simply not the correct agency to oversee this particular grantmaking process. Behavioral health services should stay within Oregon's behavioral health agency — the Oregon Health Authority — where subject matter experts are adept at applying evidence-based practices to support the behavioral healthcare and recovery services we provide.

Moving the oversight and funding decisions of the Drug Treatment and Recovery Fund to the criminal justice commission would cause more instability and uncertainty at a time when we can afford it the least. All of our homes have long waitlists, and when there is a vacancy, it is typically filled the same week that the vacancy is posted, if not the same day. We cannot afford any potential service disruptions when lives are at stake. Oregon is still in the throes of an overdose crisis, we're still losing an average of about four people a day to preventable drug overdoses. Thanks to BHRN funding, we are finally beginning to make headway in meeting the urgent need for lifesaving services — including services like the safe, supportive recovery housing Iron Tribe provides to help people achieve their recovery goals and be successful members of society.

BHRN funding from the Drug Addiction Treatment & Recovery Fund has helped Iron Tribe and our fellow BHRN providers serve some of Oregon's most vulnerable communities. Our BHRN-funded homes provide the stability and structure that individuals need to be successful in early recovery, and to lay the foundation for their long-term recovery.

Recovery housing is crucial to the continuum of housing. BHRN funding has played a very direct and important role in returning children home to their parents, and in reuniting families. We thank

you for your support thus far, and appreciate you continuing to champion our services that save lives, break cycles of generational trauma, heal families, and make the gift of recovery possible.

We can best do this by continuing to make BHRN funding decisions and manage those grantee relationships through the Oregon Health Authority. The Oregon Health Authority team is composed of individuals with education and training in, as well as a comprehensive understanding of, evidence-based recovery services. The OHA team is uniquely equipped to continue to manage the BHRN grant process, and as current providers working with this agency to successfully serve Oregonians in need, we ask that you maintain the structure as is, though we would support the proposed amendments to SB 610.. While the process of working with OHA to implement services has not been perfect, it has been successful, with services being delivered and relationships being built successfully among OHA agency members and BHRN providers. If anything, OHA simply needs more support to better facilitate this process. DATRA funding represents the second largest funding source for SUD treatment in the State of Oregon, and it only makes sense that this funding be distributed by the State agency with experience and expertise in behavioral health and SUD care.

Sincerely

Meli Rose
Iron Tribe Network