



Date: April 16, 2025

To: Joint Ways and Means Committee

From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA)

RE: Support SB 5006–SB 528 and SB 530

Co-Chairs Sanchez, Lieber, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is Daysi Bedolla Sotelo, I am the Advocacy and Policy Strategist at the Oregon Health Equity Alliance, or OHEA. We are the Regional Health Equity Coalition that serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.

I am here today to ask for your support for funding for SB 528, RHEC expansion, and SB 530, adjusting RHEC budgets for the cost of doing business.

The RHEC model started back in 2011, when OHEA and the Linn Benton Lincoln Health Equity Coalition were the first to be funded by OHA and the Northwest Health Foundation. The idea was simple but powerful: let communities lead when it comes to health equity.

Since then, six more RHECs have grown across the state including in Hood River, Southern, and Eastern Oregon. Most recently in 2022, 3 new coalitions were launched in South Coast, Marion-Polk-Yamhill and the Upqua-Willamette Valley regions.

Reflecting on our timeline, I see the sustained need for the representation RHEC's are uniquely positioned to provide ALL Oregonians. RHEC's are the local ear on the ground that help both systems and elected officials know what communities are building for themselves, and where they'd like some help.

Time has also shown that the RHEC model builds political power by preparing community members to become advocates and leaders with CBO's, CCOs, local public health departments, and county commissions. Some even sit in the legislature, shout out to Senator Kayse Jama, one of OHEA's founders.



At OHEA, we've helped on statewide policies like Cover All Kids, tuition equity for immigrant students, and stronger data systems like REAL-D and SOGI data that better reflect our communities. Locally, we focus on behavioral health, reproductive justice, and care for queer and trans communities of color—and we've made disability justice a priority in everything we do.

This model works. And we're asking you to invest in it—not just to sustain what we've built, but to bring this approach to even more regions of Oregon that are still waiting.

Thank you so much for your time, and for your continued commitment to equity across our state.

Sincerely,
Daysi Bedolla Sotelo