

Submitter: Juliet Rutter  
On Behalf Of: SB 528 and SB 530  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006  
Co-Chairs Sanchez, Lieber, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee:

Hello, my name is Juliet Rutter and I am the Interim Director of RISE of the Umpqua and Willamette Valleys testifying in support of SB 5006; specifically SB 528 that continues to expand the RHEC program, and SB 530 that will adjust the RHEC budgets for the cost of doing business.

Funding RHEC expansion and cost of business adjustment will provide critical resources to RHECs so they can continue to support the communities they serve in reducing health inequities by identifying the most important issues impacting priority populations in underserved, rural regions of Oregon. By assessing these barriers through grassroots community engagement and advocacy, they are able to uplift the voices of their communities by creating solutions to barriers through policy and systems change. The expansion and cost of business adjustment for RHECs will ensure that priority populations all over the state are getting their needs met and continuing the business of expanding this program until the whole state is covered.

I support this bill because the regions that the RHECs would expand to are the most rural in our state. With the way that the RHEC program works, it leverages the power and voices of local people in the communities they serve and it supports organization and structure so that policy and systems change can happen effectively. This program helps people who are not typically heard be heard and it helps organizations and agencies to understand how they can most effectively serve everyone, but especially the people who have been the most harmed by our current systems.

RISE is a newer coalition and we have already helped our community by collecting local information about health care barriers which has helped organizations in our service area get grants to bolster their services and invent new programs. This information has also inspired other organizations to do events like health care resource fairs at schools. We are also creating space that didn't exist before to talk about civic engagement in our communities. We look forward to expanding our services and doing even more.

This resource is vital to our communities and these resources will allow for an immediate increase in Regional Health Equity Coalitions capacity to support them. I urge you fund SB 528 and SB 530 by voting yes on SB 5006.

Thank you,  
Juliet Rutter  
Interim Director  
RISE of the Umpqua and Willamette Valleys