



P.O. Box 3209 · 900 Sunset Drive · La Grande, OR 97850 · 541-963-1431
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May 9, 2025

Co-Chairs Senator Girod Representative Nosse,
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction,

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to add to my previous testimony regarding the critical need for financial support to help bring the da Vinci robotic-assisted surgical system to Grande Ronde Hospital (GRH) in La Grande. As a 25-bed critical access hospital located in Union County, GRH serves not only our local population but also acts as a regional medical hub for residents of Baker, Wallowa, Grant, and Umatilla counties—and increasingly, patients from southeast Washington.

We respectfully ask for your support in helping fund this transformative technology for rural eastern Oregon. The da Vinci system is considered the gold standard for minimally invasive surgery, enabling surgeons to perform complex procedures with greater precision, smaller incisions, fewer complications, and faster recovery times. These benefits translate directly to better patient outcomes and increased access to care—particularly important in rural regions where travel barriers can delay or even prevent necessary treatment.

For many of our patients, advanced surgical care currently means traveling long distances—often over mountain passes and in inclement weather—at significant personal, financial, and emotional cost. Bringing this technology to GRH means more families can receive the care they need, when and where they need it, surrounded by their support systems. This is not just a matter of convenience; it's a matter of healthcare equity.

Importantly, the da Vinci system will strengthen one of our hospital's most vital service lines: OB-GYN care. We are one of the few hospitals in our region still providing comprehensive maternity and women's health services, including labor and delivery. Robotic-assisted gynecologic procedures will allow us to offer state-of-the-art care with less disruption to our patients' lives, while also improving long-term outcomes.

Additionally, recruiting and retaining high-quality physicians—particularly OB-GYNs and surgeons—is an ongoing challenge in rural Oregon. Access to modern technology like the da Vinci system is critical to attracting and retaining providers who want to practice at the same high standard they trained on in medical school and residency.

This investment is about more than one hospital. It's about strengthening the rural healthcare infrastructure for a large, underserved region of our state. The addition of this system will reduce referrals out of our area, improve patient safety and satisfaction, and help us continue expanding our services for years to come.

With your support, we can provide world-class surgical care right here in northeast Oregon. Thank you for your leadership, and for your continued investment in the health and well-being of all Oregonians—regardless of ZIP code.

Sincerely,

Patrick Flynn
Foundation Manager
Grande Ronde Hospital Foundation