



AVIVA HEALTH

March 26, 2025

Re: Support for House Bill 3921

Dear Chair Rep. Marsh, Vice-Chairs Rep. Andersen and Breese-Iverson, and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness:

On behalf of Aviva Health, I write to express our strong support for House Bill 3921, which approves recent amendments to the City of Roseburg's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and associated land use regulations. As a Federally Qualified Health Center that employs over 300 staff and serves more than 18,000 patients in rural Douglas County, Aviva Health sees this legislation as a crucial step forward in supporting rural health care access and workforce development.

Douglas County faces significant economic challenges, with the shortage of affordable housing among the most urgent. As the cost of housing continues to rise, many people simply cannot afford to live here, which impacts not only families and individuals, but also impedes businesses' ability to hire and retain workers. The resulting workforce shortages hurt local businesses and limit their capacity to contribute to economic growth. Aviva Health is currently recruiting approximately 50 staff, including many providers and clinical personnel, but the limited housing is one of the greatest barriers to attracting and retaining qualified professionals. This shortage has direct consequences on the ability to provide adequate, quality, compassionate health care for our region.

House Bill 3921's approval of the City of Roseburg and Douglas County ordinances enables the expansion and annexation of property that will directly support the construction of new housing—a vital need for our region. By clearing the way for new residential development, House Bill 3921 helps address this critical shortage and allows us to expand our clinical workforce, including physicians, advanced practice providers, dentists, behavioral health providers, and support staff. This legislation helps remove one of the key constraints to building a strong rural health care workforce, ultimately ensuring our community receives the quality care it deserves.

This legislation also strengthens our community's long-term efforts to promote responsible, sustainable, locally driven growth while maintaining compliance with state land use laws. The land exchange in House Bill 3921 specifically addresses the need to trade steep, undevelopable land for flat, buildable parcels more suitable for residential development, ensuring infrastructure costs and development are more feasible. For Aviva Health, this means a stronger foundation from which to advance our mission of promoting health and wellness for all, especially the underserved.

We are especially encouraged by House Bill 3921's potential to support future housing development: Increasing access to affordable, workforce-focused housing not only benefits those entering health professions but also makes rural training programs more



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viable—programs that are essential for building a homegrown rural health workforce. When health professionals can live in the communities they serve, they are more likely to stay and contribute to the region's long-term prosperity.

To address concerns about developable land, it's important to note this exchange allows for the development of flat, infrastructure-ready parcels—sites that are more suitable for affordable housing and less costly for construction. This directly addresses the ongoing shortage of housing in Roseburg, which has become one of the greatest obstacles to economic growth, workforce development, and improving community health.

The City of Roseburg and Douglas County have already worked collaboratively on this land swap, and the legislature's involvement ensures Roseburg can move forward with a practical solution to the housing crisis. This legislative action will help our community meet both short- and long-term housing needs and contribute to the broader goal of increasing housing access across the state.

We urge the legislature to pass House Bill 3921 to help rural communities like ours grow, thrive and meet the health care needs of our residents.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to rural Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.R.", is placed over the typed name below it.

Jay Richards, DO
Chief Medical Officer
Aviva Health