

Government Relations



March 25, 2025

To: House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

Re: Support for House Bill 2059-2

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Nelson and Javadi, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share Multnomah County's support for HB 2059-2, which increases behavioral health capacity in the Metro region for residential, and secure residential treatment facilities. Growing Oregon's behavioral health capacity is listed as a priority on [Multnomah County's 2025 legislative agenda](#), and growing capacity here in the Metro Region will not only support Multnomah County, but also the Trauma 1 region outlined in the recent [PCG Report](#), covering Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook Counties as well as Multnomah. This request is about better supporting provider shortages, bed shortages, and decreasing stress on the behavioral health system, but most of all, this is about Oregonians getting better access to care.

Along with regional partners, we're requesting \$60M for projects aimed at increasing substance use disorder treatment, recovery housing, clinical withdrawal management, and mental health residential capacity. Though these investments are aimed at the Metro Area, we recognize that this is also where many of the small rural hospitals send people for more specialized care that they don't have the capacity to handle, and as such, these investments will benefit the entire state. These projects are also shovel-ready, or partially completed and need additional funds to complete the work – these investments are important because they will be made available to the community sooner, rather than projects that are in the early stages of development.

We are grateful to Governor Kotek for underscoring the need for additional behavioral health resources by including \$90 million in her recommended budget to expand residential treatment capacity. Additional residential treatment capacity is essential for individuals who are unable to aid and assist in their own defense due to an underlying behavioral health condition so that they may step down from the Oregon State Hospital. Investing in residential treatment also reduces pressure on hospital-based services and prevents incarceration, improving long-term recovery outcomes by ensuring individuals have access to stable, therapeutic environments. Multnomah County urges the committee to fully support the investments in HB 2059-2 and to continue prioritizing behavioral health infrastructure as a fundamental part of Oregon's healthcare system.

Sincerely,

Lizzy Atwood Wills
State Coordinator, Government Relations
Multnomah County