



## **Comments in Support: House Bill 2059 with Dash-2 Amendment**

From Chris Bouneff, Executive Director, NAMI Oregon

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House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee

NAMI Oregon wishes to express its support for HB 2059 with the Dash-2 amendments, which would allocate \$90 million for the development of additional licensed residential treatment facilities in Oregon.

As revealed in the Residential+ Facility Study from Public Consulting Group, Oregon has a significant shortage of residential treatment placements for both mental health and substance use disorders. This shortfall is a consequence of the state investing next to nothing in growing community capacity following reconstruction of the Oregon State Hospital.

In recent sessions, the Legislature has tried to make up for lost time with major funding infusions to build out more community capacity. HB 2059 with the Dash-2 amendments continues this momentum.

And that's important. The question facing Oregon isn't whether to spend more money on building out capacity. With a federal court mulling a contempt order because the state cannot meet its obligations to timely serve "aid and assist" patients — and with a federal lawsuit looming because civil patients cannot access residential services — the question is whether the state will cede spending decisions to a federal judge or maintain control of its own destiny.

A similar set of circumstances played out in Washington state. There, a federal judge fined the state a total of \$400 million and directed how that funding was spent to increase capacity, with very questionable results. Oregon should avoid this scenario, and the only reliable strategy to do so is to continue to invest in community residential care.

Oregon has clear need for more investment to grow capacity, and HB 2059 with the Dash-2 amendments gives us a path forward. We urge your support.