

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office

"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
421 SW Oak Street, Portland, OR 97204
O: 503.302.9725
E: oaco.mail@oregon.gov

Testimony in support, HB 2086
House Committee on Behavioral Health
Monday, March 17, 2021, 8 am

Chair Rep. Sanchez, Vice-Chair Rep. Moore-Green, Vice Chair Rep. Nosse, and Representatives Lively, Morgan, Reynolds, Salinas, Sollman, and Wright:

The Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) and the Oregon Commission on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA), in their role as advocates for Hispanic and other underrepresented communities, strongly supports HB 2086, which appropriates moneys to Oregon Health Authority to address service, treatment and housing needs of individuals managing behavioral health disorders.

OCHA and OCAPIA support HB 2086 because it provides a significant step forward in remedying long-standing deficiencies in Oregon's mental health system. Specifically, OCHA and OCAPIA support HB 2086's attention to: (1) the complex and interdependent nature of mental illness and substance use disorders, which frequently co-occur; and (2) the need for increased workforce capacity to meet the diversity of needs across Oregon, an issue that is of utmost importance to OCHA & OCAPIA.

OCHA and OCAPIA also particularly value the forward thinking of HB 2086, evidenced by its inclusion of housing needs as a critical part of supporting improved mental health for all Oregonians. Research has shown that having stable housing directly relates to improved school success and health indicators.

For too long, Oregon has ranked lowest in mental health services in comparison. OCHA and OCAPIA believe that HB 2086, by addressing a gap in the current system and accounting for the need for a provider workforce capable of filling that gap, will significantly help Oregon's mental health services improve.

Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

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Mohamed Alyajouri, Co-Chair
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Senator Michael Dembrow

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Albert Lee, Executive Director
Nancy Kramer, Executive Assistant
Dr. Connie Kim-Gervey,
Researcher/Policy Analyst

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OCHA and OCAPIA thank the committee for their positive consideration of HB 2086.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink.

Hussein Al-Baiaty/Mohamed Alyajouri, OCAPIA Co-Chairs

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Irma Linda Castillo, OCHA Chair