

Dear HCMO Community Review Board,

My name is Mark Jackson. I am a Portland native and have been deeply involved in a variety of organizations serving the community. I am the Assistant Pastor of Oasis of Praise International Ministries, the Board Treasurer of the Coalition of African and African American Pastors, CEO and Board Member of Bridge-Pamoja, and Co-Founder and Executive Director of REAP Inc. I very much appreciate that the Community Review Board is interested in seeing the historical harms rectified in the Albina community and appreciate you asking thoughtful questions. I am writing today to give you my perspective – the perspective of someone who is from the community in question.

I have had the privilege of engaging in conversations with leadership from both OHSU and Legacy Health, and I am encouraged by their commitment to transparency and community engagement. Specifically, I appreciate OHSU's efforts to come "off the hill" and actively seek input from community members. I am also pleased by the discussions around ensuring health equity and dismantling historical mistrust. This is very important for the communities I work with and serve.

Before urban renewal came to Albina, it had a thriving black community, including thriving black businesses. After urban renewal, there was displacement and heartache. Legacy and OHSU have both engaged community leaders in issues of helping restore the community and have focused in particular on a specific project – the Hill Block. One cannot minimize the tangible and symbolic importance of the Hill Block – the historic heart of the community -- which is now a collaborative redevelopment effort between community leaders, the City, and Legacy Health. On Feb 28th, the Hill Block project broke ground. For fifty years, the land was left vacant.

There is still much work to do to rectify past harms. At the public hearing you held on March 5, Alice Cuprill Comas, OHSU's long-time General Counsel, stated that she knows that rebuilding trust requires a long-term commitment and meaningful engagement with community by OHSU. After years of working with OHSU, and engaging with Alice and other members of OHSU's leadership, Alice's statement at the public hearing reinforces my confidence that OHSU is committed to meaningful work in partnership with the black community in Albina should OHA approve the merger. If such approval does not occur, it is highly unlikely that anyone else who would merge with Legacy Health would be from the State of Oregon, and it is unlikely they would be as committed to rectifying historic harms.

I welcome the opportunity to speak directly with the Community Review Board members if there's interest to provide a deeper context for my advocacy of this merger and health equity.

Thanks so much for considering my perspective.



Pastor Mark Jackson