

DAVID GOMBERG
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 10



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 23, 2025

Dear Members of the Community Review Board,

Thank you for your service on the Community Review Board for the OHSU–Legacy Health transaction.

As its name makes clear, the Community Review Board was established by the Oregon Legislature as part of the Healthcare Oversight legislation to ensure that the voice of the community is central in decisions that will shape the future of healthcare in our state.

One concern in particular has emerged with overwhelming clarity: the continued investment by OHSU in the Oregon National Primate Research Center (ONPRC). The public record is full of comments questioning how OHSU can justify staff cuts while maintaining an expensive, error-prone and ethically troubling facility.

Unfortunately, OHSU’s March 7 response did little to address these issues. The statement claimed compliance with federal and state guidelines but failed to acknowledge that the Oregon Legislature enacted HB 2904 in 2023 specifically due to repeated animal welfare violations and transparency issues at this facility.

People who took the time to share their views—many of them deeply informed and heartfelt—will understandably feel dismissed, disillusioned, and frustrated if those views are not well addressed.

Some of us have visited the ONPRC personally and understand why the public is asking hard questions.

Comments submitted to the CRB have raised serious questions about experiments involving high alcohol dosing, drug administration to pregnant monkeys, and reproductive procedures that many believe have little relevance to improving human health. These are not abstract critiques. They are grounded in ethical and financial concerns about the use of public resources.

The cost of maintaining the ONPRC is approximately \$60 million annually, and the facility occupies real estate worth nearly a quarter-billion dollars. Harvard University faced a similar decision in 2015 and chose to close its primate research center, retrain staff, and reinvest in areas better aligned with patient care and scientific progress. Harvard’s stature and leadership in medicine only grew stronger as a result.

OHSU has yet to explain why it would not consider a similar transition.

Given the strength and volume of public concern, we respectfully suggest that the Community Review Board formally pose this question to OHSU: “Given that ending the financial investment in the primate research facility would free up nearly a quarter-billion dollars in real estate, eliminate an ongoing \$60 million annual cost, and help restore public confidence, please describe how OHSU would close the center if required to do so and how it would repurpose the facility to benefit patient care.”

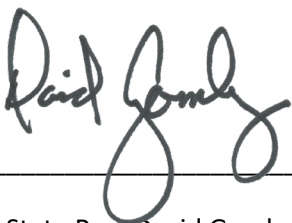
We further request that if you consider a merger approval, that you do so with consideration of public comments regarding the primate center. Thousands of Oregonians have engaged with this process in good faith, believing their voices would matter by contacting you requesting the closure of the primate center as a condition of this merger. The people who have signed this petition are not activists - they are doctors, nurses, patients, small business owners, large business owners, police officers, public employees and many others. They represent Oregon.

A merger condition requirement for closure is allowed and it is clearly what the community has asked for given the comments and public meeting. We therefore ask the CRB to either address these concerns or provide a statement of why they are not relevant.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to put OHSU on a path to a better financial future, while addressing objectionable practices at ONPRC being perpetuated in the name of the State of Oregon.

Thank you again for your service and for the responsibility you carry. The public is watching, and they are counting on you.

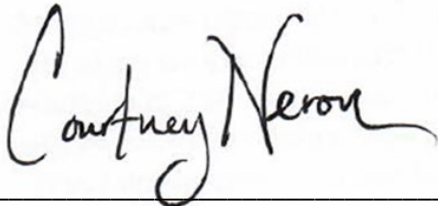
Sincerely,



State Rep. David Gomberg



State Rep. Farrah Chaichi



State Rep. Courtney Neron