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Submitted via hcmo.info@oha.oregon.gov

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Dear Dr. Hathi,

As a practicing surgeon and the vice president of health equity at OHSU Health, my role is to ensure that the health system produces the highest level of health and health care for all people. I am passionate about health equity and have served on several boards of community organizations that uplift health equity, including North by Northeast Community Health clinic and REAP (Reaching and Empowering All People). Centering equity, OHSU Health aims to partner across all communities, sectors and regions of the state to recognize, reconcile and rectify historical and ongoing injustices stemming from bias, racism and other social and structural factors that influence access to health care and health outcomes. I am writing to highlight how the integrated public university health system created by the combination of OHSU and Legacy Health will prioritize and advance health equity.

Building a diverse, equitable environment where all can thrive and excel is core to our values at OHSU. We know that the dignity of patients is affirmed when practitioners understand not just the needs of patients but also their goals of care. We believe that students learn best in an educational environment enriched with a variety of lived experiences and perspectives. We believe that diversity drives creativity, promotes innovation and facilitates problem solving in ways that benefit everyone.

OHSU and Legacy's integration proposal is different from typical health care mergers in its concrete plans to prioritize health equity. A health equity focus ensures that the highest quality, safest, most efficient and timely healthcare is delivered for each person in a way that centers their uniqueness. The OHSU-Legacy integration includes improvements in health equity initiatives and the formal filing with the state includes specific measurement and accountability commitments.

Donn Spight, MD, FACS, FASMB
Professor of Surgery
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The equity improvements in the integrated public university health system include commitments to:

- Disaggregate demographic information in current data systems and prioritize identified equity indicators / measures,
- Improve the quality of culturally responsive services,
- Improve access to quality behavioral health care and improve behavioral health equity outcomes,
- Improve the health outcomes of people who are underserved, with potential metrics focused on breast cancer screening, reproductive health, colorectal cancer screening, maternal care, diabetes control, hypertension control, and children's health, and
- Increase the demographic diversity of people participating in clinical trials.

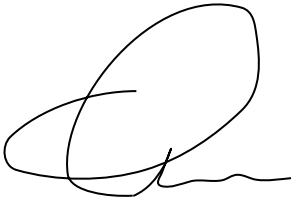
Further, the proposal submitted to the state outlines a preliminary set of new investments in health equity due to the integration, including implementing a health equity strategy in collaboration with a community advisory group rooted in community engagement.

As a health system, OHSU provides primary and preventative health care and treats people when they are sick. But so much determines health outcomes long before someone seeks primary care or needs treatment for an illness.

The proposal also commits that the reconfigured Health System Board of the integrated system will consider recommendations to address historical and contemporary factors contributing to health inequities by increasing the budget allocated to health equity initiatives, with a goal of spending at least an additional \$10 million over five years compared with the current investment by OHSU. Potential investments include enhancement of data tools needed to monitor health disparities, equity impact analysis, population driven place-based care, and expansion of meaningful language access services.

In front of us we have a unique opportunity to build a new OHSU with a greater reach and opportunity to advance the health and well being of all people. At the center of that work to deliver health care in every community is health equity. These commitments will set us toward a better future for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' followed by a smaller 'S' and a horizontal line.

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