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My name is Joe McFerrin II, and I am the President and CEO of Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center (POIC). I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed integration of OHSU and Legacy Health.

POIC has a long history of serving the Portland community, supporting underserved youth, adults, and families. We have been a part of this community since 1967 and our non-profit currently serves over 3,000 individuals each year with programs focused on education, employment and training, community safety, and family wellness.

We see the integration of OHSU and Legacy Health as a significant opportunity to enhance the health and well-being of our community. Both OHSU and Legacy have partnered with us on violence prevention for several years, embedding our Healing Hurt People program within their trauma departments. Through this program, victims of community violence treated at OHSU Hospital or Legacy's Emanuel Hospital get a visit from a rapid-response case manager within 4 hours of arriving. On-call case managers with Healing Hurt People work to prevent retribution by engaging directly with victims to support them and their families. The program serves people of color between 10 and 44 years of age, and saves lives by reducing retaliatory violence.

As the leader of a large, local non-profit with approximately 200 staff, I also think about the proposed integration in terms of how it will impact my staff and their families' ability to access the health care they need. Last October, we accepted OHSU's offer to have their leadership meet with our staff – I knew they would have important questions and insights, and they did.

While I can't speak for my staff, I can say that my takeaway from that presentation and multiple meetings with OHSU's leadership is that they are taking community input seriously, and that this integration will break the dysfunctional status quo and improve access to high-quality health care. I am particularly interested in the potential for expanded partnerships in behavioral health, violence prevention, and community wellness.

I urge the community review board, the Oregon Health Authority, and Governor Kotek to support the proposed integration of OHSU and Legacy Health. I fully expect this partnership will strengthen our community and create a stronger, healthier future for all.

Sincerely,

Joe McFerrin II
President and CEO