



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press Contact:

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Andersen Praises Marion County Decision to Opt In to Expand Treatment for Addiction

Legislation passed today allows counties to opt-in to deflection programs to get people into treatment and out of jail.

SALEM, Ore. — Today, **Rep. Tom Andersen** (D-South Salem), a first-term legislator and former Salem City Councilor, expressed his support and commitment to assist Marion County's plan to expand their successful deflection program after the State House's passage of HB 400.

"I know how our local governments see and are called to respond to the effects of the drug crisis," said Andersen. "This bill gives counties the tools to support and enhance access to rehabilitation and keep people out of the criminal justice system. Marion County was used as an example when the policy committee reviewed local programs to help connect people struggling with addiction to treatment."

The bill creates programs which will deflect people into treatment as an alternative to criminal penalties. Programs consist of community-based organization, peer support organizations, and others to create a county-wide approach to connecting people struggling from addiction to treatment. Marion County will expand the evidence-based solution they have today called Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD).

In a letter signed by Marion County Commissioners Kevin Cameron, Danielle Bethell, and Colm Willis, the county signaled its intention to participate in these programs. "Marion county is already deeply committed to the diversion of individuals facing drug-related charges and the use of objective evidence-based national standards to do so," the letter states.

The county plans to use state funding to support and expand this program. Andersen plans to support those efforts however else he can in the legislature.

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