



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

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Behavioral Health Workers Supported Under Senate Action

House Bill 4004 will strengthen behavioral health workforce, mental health services

SALEM – Today, the Senate approved [House Bill 4004](#) on a vote of 24 to 2. This legislation will help support and increase Oregon’s behavioral health workforce by directing the Oregon Health Authority to administer a grant program to increase practitioner wages, offer retention bonuses, or recruit and hire new behavioral health staff.

“Across the state, Behavioral Health providers are struggling to attract and maintain a workforce. Many workers serve in these roles because of a deep passion for the work, and compassion for their community. However, that passion is not enough to sustain themselves or their families on current wages, and many are making the heartbreaking decision to leave the field and move to positions where they can make a decent living,” said [Senator Kate Lieber](#) (D-Beaverton), Co-Chair of the Joint Ways and Means Committee on Human Services, who carried House Bill 4004 on the Senate floor. “This short-term investment, alongside a longer-term investment in reimbursement rates, will provide greatly needed stability for workers and for patients.”

House Bill 4004 bill would appropriate \$132 million General Fund to OHA for a one-time grant fund that providers can apply to and then flexibly use the funds to maintain their workforce and keep their doors open. Providers can use these funds to increase compensation for their staff, pay retention bonuses, or hire new staff. Funds must be distributed quickly, no later than May 31st of this year.

House Bill 4004 now goes to the Governor for her signature.

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