

**State Representative
Duane Stark
House District 4**



**State Representative
Carl Wilson
House District 3**

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Landmark Legislation to Promote Sober Facilities Adopted by Oregon House

(Salem) Important legislation to promote the use of sober facilities in Oregon was adopted by the House of Representatives in Salem today. [House Bill 2936](#) establishes accountability measures and limited legal immunity for sobering facilities. [HB 2936](#) was introduced by the House Health Care Committee at the request of the Grants Pass Sobering Center and spearheaded by State Representatives [Duane Stark](#) and [Carl Wilson](#) from the Grants Pass area.

"Individuals who are acutely intoxicated on drugs or alcohol shouldn't have to spend the night in a jail cell or the waiting room at a hospital emergency department," said State Representative Duane Stark (R-Josephine County). "These facilities offer a humane alternative for individuals in their hour of need, offering them a safe place where they can sober up and be referred to a treatment program when appropriate."

"The need for sobering facilities exists - like it or not - and we're compelled to find a solution," said State Representative Carl Wilson (R-Grants Pass). "I believe this type of community-based effort is a cost-effective and compassionate way to address this burdensome public health and safety concern in our cash-strapped rural counties."

The new law will require sober facilities to contract or affiliate with a treatment program for training and other consultation including making referrals for treatment. Sober facilities will also have to establish safety practices for intoxicated individuals and staff.

"HB 2936 will conserve tax dollars and allow an important option for community policing," said Dick Adams, Grants Pass attorney and member of the Board of Governors of the [Oregon Trial Lawyers Association](#). "We were thrilled to work closely with Representative Stark to make sure that sobering facilities are safe and that Oregonians' rights are protected."

"Grants Pass has been struggling with people severely inebriated who are taking up scarce space in county jails and emergency rooms, often leaving our enforcement officers frustrated," explained Grants Pass Police Chief Bill Landis. "Police officers have a necessary community caretaking obligation, but it becomes impossible when we have no ability to get these individuals any help. A sobering center in Grants Pass will help law enforcement immensely!"

[Under HB 2936](#) any sober facilities currently operating as part of a larger treatment facility can register with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) by the end of 2015. Only 3 new facilities will be allowed to register starting next year while state regulators study the implementation of HB 2936 and report back to the 2017 legislature.

Sober facilities are in the works in several other counties across the state including Klamath, Douglas, and Baker counties. "We wholeheartedly support sobering centers as a critical crisis service and alternative to incarceration," added Cherryl Ramirez, Director for the [Association of Oregon Community Mental Health](#)

[Programs](#). “Sobering centers are an entry point to addictions treatment for individuals who would otherwise not seek help.”

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