

Oregon Health Authority
Health Care Market Oversight Program
Barbara Roberts Human Services Building
500 Summer Street NE, E-65
Salem, OR 97301

Oct. 31, 2024

As the state's leading advocates for health equity and worker justice, we want to express our support for OHSU's proposed acquisition of Legacy Health.

Our organizations supported the legislation that created the HCMO program, which ensures that patients are prioritized in mergers, acquisitions, affiliations, and other transactions involving a health care entity. While consolidation can have negative consequences, we must accept the realities of the current moment: Legacy Health is struggling financially and maintaining the services they provide is essential.

We believe OHSU is the best entity to make this acquisition because Legacy will continue to be accountable to the people of Oregon -- unlike acquisitions by private equity or large, out-of-state for-profit hospital operators that are becoming increasingly common in our state. A health system that is so firmly rooted in Oregon creates the best conditions under which we can achieve our health equity goals.

Specifically, we see the following benefits of the proposed transaction:

- *Expanded access to quality care.* OHSU has committed to reduced patient wait times, including reduced wait times for primary and specialist appointments and reduced wait times for surgeries and procedures. OHSU has made a capital commitment of \$1 billion that will shore up Legacy's ability to deliver high-quality care by financing needed facility upgrades and hiring additional frontline staff. Legacy's current facilities serve some of the most racially and ethnically diverse populations in the Portland Metro area, as well as high numbers of Medicaid patients. The continuation of culturally appropriate care around the Emanuel neighborhood, and on-going access to services generally in East Portland, are essential.
- *Investments in building a workforce for today and tomorrow.* OHSU has committed to annually invest \$10 million in specific education trusts. Investing in career development opportunities and education support not only helps current workers stay in healthcare and deliver even better care, but it recruits new workers to help solve the short staffing crisis that our state faces.
- *Protections for reproductive and gender-affirming care.* OHSU has historically been a leader in reproductive and gender-affirming care and under such leadership we

expect Legacy's services and supports in these areas to not just be protected, but invested in.

- *Advancing racial justice and culturally competent care for all.* After closing, Legacy's remaining assets will be used to create a multi-million-dollar foundation focused solely on funding activities that further health equity and access in Oregon and Southwest Washington. On top of this investment, the health system has made binding commitments with its labor partners to complete institution-wide equity training, participate in workforce training trusts that further culturally competent care, and share data so that progress can be tracked and accountability ensured.

Moreover, we see OHSU's agreement with several unions as evidence that the health system is committed to delivering on promises made in this filing. OHSU has made legally binding partnerships with frontline health care workers, recognizing and supporting those who will make this vision reality.

For these reasons and more, we support OHSU's application to the HCMO program and urge the Oregon Health Authority to do the same.

