

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Board of Commissioners Office



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July 7, 2025

Youth Development Division
255 Capitol St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97310

Re: Letter of Support – Columbia Health Services Youth Support Center

Dear Review Board:

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners is proud to support Columbia Health Services in its proposal to develop a Youth Support Center serving young people in our community. This initiative will provide a safe, welcoming space where youth can access the services, support, and sense of belonging they need to thrive.

Columbia Health Services has deep roots in our county. Once a part of County government and now operating as an independent nonprofit, the organization has consistently delivered critical services to local residents. We continue to partner closely with their team on efforts ranging from substance use prevention and harm reduction to youth housing, suicide prevention, and educational outreach.

The organization also maintains strong working relationships with school districts, DHS, Youth Era, Columbia Pacific CCO, NOHA, Community Action Team, Columbia Community Mental Health, SAFE, SNAP, WIC, and others. Their ability to bring partners together and coordinate wraparound services makes them uniquely positioned to lead this project.

The need for youth-centered spaces and support systems in Columbia County has been clear for years. Our 2008 Comprehensive Plan for Children and Families identified this as a priority, and that need has only grown more urgent. This project offers a practical, community-driven response—providing everything from crisis services to mentorship, after-school programming, and housing support under one roof.

We believe the Youth Support Center will make a lasting difference in the lives of young people and families across Columbia County. We're proud to stand behind Columbia Health Services in this important work.

Sincerely,



Kellie Jo Smith, Chair



Margaret Magruder, Commissioner



Casey Garrett, Commissioner