

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

April 15, 2024

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure,


We write to express our support for the Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) grant application to strengthen its provision of Medicaid-funded school-based health services. These funds were made available for the implementation, enhancement, and expansion of school-based services financed by Medicaid under Section 11003 of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA).

As you know, in 2014, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) changed course to allow states to seek Medicaid reimbursement for health services for all students enrolled in Medicaid. Oregon is one of a limited number of states that has since taken the initiative to expand their use of Medicaid to support a broad range of health services delivered in the school-based setting; Oregon received approval from CMS in 2023 to expand Medicaid-funded health services delivered in the school-based setting beyond services listed on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and expand the type of services and providers eligible for Medicaid reimbursement in the school-based setting.

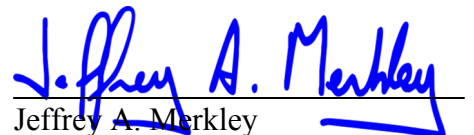
Congress supported this important work by authorizing Section 11003 of the BSCA to give states across the country the resources to stand up and grow their own Medicaid-funded school-based health services programs. This planning grant would help OHA and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to prepare Oregon's schools to provide a holistic approach to students' medical and behavioral health needs provided in school settings, expand the availability of reimbursement for all medically-necessary Medicaid-covered services provided in the school-based setting, support school districts and local education agencies (LEAs) via technical assistance and training, and support community engagement. These are exactly the types of activities we envisioned these grants could support.

We are excited about this opportunity for Oregon, and we are confident OHA will use this grant funding to effectively fill current gaps in their provision of Medicaid-funded school-based health services. Thank you for your full and fair review of proposals for this funding, and for all your efforts to improve access to health care, and particularly behavioral health care, for Americans.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator