

From: "Maxey Robin" <robin.maxey@state.or.us>
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Office of the Senate President
900 Court St., N.E., Room S-201
Salem OR 97301
www.leg.state.or.us/senate/senpres

News Release

Contact: Robin Maxey

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(503) 986-1605

robin.maxey@state.or.us

Senate President Comments on State Hospital Report, Resignation of Superintendent

“This report is disturbing. It’s disappointing and it’s frustrating. The shameful failures in the case of Mr. Perez reveal a culture at the Oregon State Hospital that must change. It’s been more than two years since we received the report from the U.S. Department of Justice. I know progress has been made, but when I read this report I wonder how much some things have really changed.

“For decades we allowed mental health care in our state to be out of sight and out of mind. The employees at the Oregon State Hospital have been asked to perform some of the hardest, most thankless jobs in our society under deplorable conditions.

“Since the discovery of the room of forgotten souls and passage of mental health parity in 2005 we have tried to correct that grave injustice. Advancements have been made under Roy Orr’s leadership. He’s given it his all and we can build on what he has done in the last two years. I wish Roy the best in his future.

“This report makes it clear, however, that the pace of our progress is too slow. We are building a new state hospital facility, but the problems go beyond bricks and mortar. Oregon State Hospital needs a transformation of culture within its walls. Good enough is no longer good enough. Excellence must be the new standard. We owe it to the patients. We owe it to their families. We owe to the employees. We owe it to Oregon.”