March 9, 2018

Dear Drs. Rohlman, Ho and Tanguay,

On behalf of the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO), I’m extending our support and interest in partnership with the Community Engagement Core (CEC) and the Integrated Health Sciences Facility Core (IHSFC) of the Environmental Health Sciences Center at Oregon State University, titled “Pacific Northwest Center for Translational Environmental Health Research.” The Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO) is a dues-based membership association that primarily focuses on making sure Local Health Departments have the ability and resources to improve the health of all people living in Oregon, and at the most basic level, properly address public health needs and protect their communities. We have members from every county in Oregon, and are a primary venue for planning and implementation of concerted action across counties to address prioritized issues.

One such issue is public health modernization. Oregon is one of several states undergoing strategically directed public health modernization. The purpose of modernization is to develop and define the functions and activities of a modernized public health system, as well as to develop a communication toolkit to be used in building support and understanding public health modernization. In our new model, environmental health is one of four foundational programs, with the intent to create greater synergies with other programs (prevention and health promotion, access to clinical preventative services, and communicable disease control) using common foundational capabilities. We anticipate that legislative support will be directed towards environmental health issues in the next few years. The existence of an Environmental Health Sciences Center at OSU would provide exciting opportunities for partnership.

We can already anticipate several ways in which we can meaningfully collaborate with the Center. First, should the Center be funded, CLHO would value the opportunity to serve on the CEC Stakeholder Advisory Board and participate in IHSFC Stakeholder/EHSC investigator forums. These would provide the ongoing opportunity to ensure that the Center activities addresses community concerns regarding environmental health issues, and would draw strength from existing university and community partnerships. Second, we would work with you to support communities in becoming more environmentally health literate. Finally, we are highly interested in the potential opportunity for pilot projects to empower communities to engage more fully in science through community-engaged research and co-production of knowledge.

We are highly supportive of having this Center be re-established in Oregon, and welcome the opportunities for meaningful engagement to understand and translate findings at the community level. We are confident that such a Center will extend and enhance the expertise that exists in environmental health; it will provide opportunities to build new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships between researchers and stakeholders.

Sincerely,

[*Signature*]

*First Name, Last Name*

*Affiliation*

*Contact information*