



THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

June 15, 2006

Shanetta Y. Cutlar
U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Special Litigation Section
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Ms. Cutlar:

I am writing in response to your agency's letter of June 14, 2006, regarding an investigation of conditions at the Oregon State Hospital. I appreciate receiving notice of the investigation, and I share your commitment to protecting patients' civil rights at the Oregon State Hospital.

Improving Oregon's public mental health system has ranked among my top priorities since I took office. We have taken important steps in recent years to improve the quality of patient care at the hospital, including the investment of additional resources to improve the staff-to-patient ratio. We have acted to strengthen hospital protocols to protect patients from harm, and to move patients who are ready for discharge into community settings as quickly as possible.

Just last week, I joined the Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives and the President of the Oregon Senate in announcing a bipartisan plan to transform Oregon's mental health system, which will include construction of several new state hospital facilities to replace the existing Oregon State Hospital facilities. Thus, the State of Oregon has begun making important changes to our mental health system, which will benefit families, hospital staff and taxpayers.

I welcome a review of conditions at the Oregon State Hospital by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. I am confident that any recommendations resulting from that review will help us as we proceed with our plan to implement a reform of Oregon's mental health system. I also appreciate your offer to identify assistance that the federal government might provide to correct any deficiencies.

I have directed Dr. Bruce Goldberg, Director of the Oregon Department of Human Services, and Dr. Marvin Fickle, Superintendent of the Oregon State Hospital, to cooperate fully with your investigation. They have assured me they will do so.

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In addition, I have consulted with Oregon Attorney General Hardy Myers on this matter. The Attorney General has designated Micky Logan, an attorney in his office, to serve as Oregon's liaison with the U.S. Department of Justice on all matters related to the Oregon State Hospital. Please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Logan at (503) 947-4540 to discuss how the State of Oregon can cooperate with your investigation.

Sincerely,



Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor

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cc: The Honorable Hardy Myers, Attorney General
Dr. Bruce Goldberg, Director, Oregon Department of Human Services
Dr. Marvin Fickle, Superintendent, Oregon State Hospital
Karin J. Immergut, U.S. Attorney, District of Oregon
Don Arnold, Oregon Department of Justice
Micky Logan, Oregon Department of Justice