



Blue Mountain Hospital District

170 Ford Road, John Day, OR 97845
BlueMountainHospital.org

May 6th, 2023

To whom it may concern:

It is my understanding that there is some discussion in Morrow county and perhaps contiguous counties regarding a potential restructuring of the ambulance services in that area. If this was to happen as proposed, I believe it would have an enormous negative effect on the Medicare reimbursement rates to the services already provided by the hospital district in that county.

As a CEO of a nearby hospital district I know how devastating this would be to our county and to the hospital district. We are already operating at a significant annual loss (those losses subsidized by other hospital departments) and if our current Medicare payment rates were reduced even more it would make our position even more difficult, especially in a time when we, along with two-thirds of all hospitals in Oregon, are operating at a negative bottom line.

I would encourage decision-makers on this topic to carefully consider the very difficult position this would put the existing ambulance services in if another organization began ambulance services in part of the current service area. If Morrow County Health District operates at a loss and they receive higher Medicare reimbursement through their critical access designation, wouldn't it be that much more difficult for a stand-alone ambulance service to make it work with lower reimbursement and without the ability to subsidize the operations from other departments?

Sincerely,

Cam Marlowe, CEO
Blue Mountain Hospital District