



Making Quality Homecare  
Affordable for all Oregon Seniors

February 10, 2014

To: The Honorable Laurie Monnes-Anderson, Chair  
The Honorable Jeff Kruse, Vice-Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

RE: **SB 1542 - Support**

For aging Oregonians and those with disabilities, access to quality homecare can make the difference between being able to live independently in the comfort of their own home and having to move into a care facility. That's why we, the undersigned, urge your support of SB 1542, which will make quality homecare affordable for all Oregon seniors.

With the costs for private-pay homecare averaging 88% of median income for seniors, finding affordable, quality care can be a challenge. Currently, Oregonians whose care is paid for by Medicaid have the option to hire a homecare provider through the Oregon Home Care Commission Registry—a system that has been upheld as a best practice nationwide for providing choice, security and access to homecare consumers.

For individuals who are not on Medicaid, there are currently only two options available: hiring a caregiver through an agency, or advertising and hiring on their own. This bill will enable Oregonians at all income levels to search the registry and hire a trained, background-checked caregiver who best meets their needs.

SB 1542 addresses several critical shortfalls in the current system:

- **Autonomy:** The relationship with a homecare worker is very personal. This bill enables Oregonians to personally hire and supervise a homecare worker who fits their needs and schedule, rather than giving up control to an agency who makes those decisions for them.
- **Security and peace-of-mind:** By providing access to a trained, background-checked workforce and handling the administrative side of the employment relationship, this bill eliminates the worry of hiring on the "grey market."

- **Affordability:** Because the state is only recouping administrative costs rather than trying to make a profit, the costs to consumers will be lower, enabling more Oregonians to afford homecare.
- **Access:** In non-metro areas, it is currently difficult for individuals to find caregivers. The Oregon Home Care Commission Registry and Referral system includes qualified caregivers in all 36 counties, enhancing access to homecare throughout the state.

The ability to choose and hire a high-quality homecare worker who has passed a background check and received training means **independence, safety, and peace-of-mind** for aging Oregonians and people with disabilities.

We respectfully ask you to support passage of SB 1542 this legislative session.

Sincerely,

Steve Weiss, President  
Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens

Jim McConnell, President  
United Seniors of Oregon

Bob Joondeph, Executive Director  
Disability Rights Oregon

Jon Bartholomew, Public Policy Director  
Alzheimer's Association Oregon Chapter



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