



February 12, 2015

Senator Alan Bates, Co-Chair
Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair
Joint Subcommittee on Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co Chairs Bates, Nathanson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 5521, the budget bill to support the office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman. The office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is a critical piece of Oregon's system of long-term services and supports. Operating as the advocate for the individual who is receiving long-term care within a facility setting, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's office is very directly promoting Oregon's overall goals of increasing independence, dignity, choice and safety for our seniors and people with disabilities.

Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities work in collaboration with the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman through Adult Protective Services, the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC), Older Americans Act Programs, Adult Foster Care and other programs at the local level.

The expansion of the office to include public guardian and conservator services provides a necessary option to protect individuals who do not have friends or family available yet need guardian help. Oregon's long-term care system benefits from this additional program through an established office.

O4AD and our members look forward to our continued work with the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman and ask that you support their budget for the 2015-17 biennium, SB 5521.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rodney Schwoeder, Chair
O4AD

NorthWest Senior & Disability Services, Executive Director - Operations