



ORA envisions communities where people with disabilities live rich, fulfilling and inclusive lives.

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Oregon Rehabilitation Association (ORA)

Testimony by Chris Burnett, Executive Director of ORA

House Committee on Consumer Protection and Government Effectiveness

1pm

Hearing Room D

HB 2925: Prohibits qualified nonprofit agency for individuals with disabilities from paying less than state minimum wage to employees who are individuals with disabilities if employees perform services at facility or site other than facility or site that qualified nonprofit agency for individuals with disabilities owns or leases.

HB 2925 takes the most measured approach of the three QRF bills being considered by the legislature this session. Although it would affect fewer people, QRFs still fear that it will result in loss of contracts and jobs for people with disabilities.

- **Smaller scope.** By restricting the bill to contracts performed outside of a QRF facility, the number of people impacted is greatly reduced compared to the other bills. While SB 555 would include more than 500 individuals, HB 2925 would affect less than 100 workers.
- **Rural Impact.** QRFs in rural regions are more reliant upon productivity-based wages. The jobs they provide are most at risk under HB 2925, because their prices will go up the most and because DAS has little authority over political subdivisions in rural areas.
- **DAS already stretched thin.** HB 2925 asks DAS to ensure compliance with the bill. Unfortunately, DAS is operating near capacity, with one-half of the people administering the QRF Program as in the past. This adds another layer of oversight that puts additional pressure on DAS staff and reduces the amount of time available to further the purposes of the Program.
- **Similar to Executive Order.** QRFs are already incentivized to pay minimum wage in community settings as part of the Governor's Executive Order. While the Executive Order uses incentives to achieve its purpose, HB 2925 takes a regulatory approach to achieve the same aim.

HB 2925 is the most moderate of the three QRF bills being considered by the legislature this session. Nevertheless, we encourage legislators to carefully consider revisions made to this employment program that has worked for so many people with disabilities for so long, and whether they are truly necessary.