



DAN RAYFIELD
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 16

March 7, 2017

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee:

I write to express my strong support for **HB 2684**. This bill works to address several inadequacies in Oregon's group homes that serve individuals with developmental disabilities. These homes provide services for some of the most vulnerable Oregonians, and we must ensure the quality of care is adequate to meet their needs while providing a livable wage to the workers who provide this critical care.

First, HB 2684 will increase transparency where little is currently required. Group home owners would have to submit annual financial reports and disclose information to help expose conflicts of interest. Second, the bill increases fines for violations and strengthens protections for whistleblowers who report abuse. The current penalties are too low to act as a deterrent and enhanced whistleblower protections will help keep residents safer. Finally, this bill raises base wages for group home workers to \$15 per hour. A wage increase is necessary to provide these workers with a livable wage and help reduce the industry's extremely high turnover rate, which some estimates place at 90 percent annually. This turnover is financially costly for group home managers and lowers the quality of care their residents receive.

Given the importance of the services provided at Oregon's group homes, I respectfully request your support for HB 2684

Very Truly Yours,

Dan Rayfield
Representative - House District 16

