

Co-chair Rayfield, Co-Chair Steiner-Hayward, my name is Kyndall Mason. I am a policy strategist for SEIU Local 503, and I also serve as the current legislative chair for the Campaign for Oregon's Seniors and People with Disabilities. I am here on behalf of both SEIU and coalition partners of the campaign, to support the budget for the office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman.

Both the campaign partners and SEIU feel the Long Term Care Ombudsman plays a crucial role in making sure that consumers have an advocate in assuring that our state's long term care and supports are doing what we say we want them to do, which is to offer people independence, choice and dignity. SEIU supported the expansion of the Long Term Care Ombudsman in 2013, when legislation was passed to include group homes in the intellectual and developmental disability support services.

The recommendations contained in the GRB are a harsh reality of the choice we continue to make, which is to cut funding that provides effective and efficient services, while our tax structure leaves some not paying their fair share. If we want to continue to innovate and be pioneers in long term care, as we have been for the last 30 years, we are going to need to create revenue and fund the programs we know are making a difference, and the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman clearly makes a difference for thousands of Oregonians. Furthermore, it accomplishes its goals efficiently by using a large group of highly trained volunteers..

The Campaign, along with SEIU, appreciates the continued investments in the Long Term Care Ombudsman office, but we cannot accept these cuts to vital and cost effective services while Oregon lags behind other states in what we collect from corporate taxes. We hope to continue to work together to make our long term care system live up to its promises of choice, independence and dignity through a strong, independent Long Term Care Ombudsman program.

Thank you very much.

Kyndall Mason
SEIU Local 503, Policy Strategist
Campaign for Oregon Seniors & People with Disabilities, legislative chair