



Oregon Council on
Developmental Disabilities

BETTER TOGETHER

April 24, 2017

To: House Human Services Committee

From: Jaime Daignault, Executive Director

RE: Support for SB 834 Directing DHS to create a plan for a human rights committee

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee:

My name is Jaime Daignault. I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities. We work to ensure that all communities welcome and value people with disabilities and their families. Sixty percent of our Council membership is family members and self-advocates.

We believe communities are strongest when all member's rights are respected and people have supports they need to work and live the lives they choose. We embrace the opportunity of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) rules to guarantee that people with IDD are supported to be members of their communities and enjoy basic freedoms like everyone else, like having control over your daily schedule. We know that people are most successful when they experience dignity of risk, their choices are supported and they have control over their own lives.

Unfortunately, we are aware that for a variety of reasons, not everyone using IDD services is granted basic freedoms. Some people do not get to choose when and what to eat, to be in charge of their daily schedules or to share items with roommates. Most importantly, some people are not allowed to invite friends or intimate partners to their homes at all or without prior approval.

If basic freedoms like this are restricted in a person's support plan, we believe a human rights commission would ensure that other less restrictive alternatives are tried first, that such restrictions do not last longer than necessary, and that persons are given informed choice regarding a restriction.

Although not part of the bill, we would hope that the commission would have a voting majority of families and self-advocates. These people directly impacted by services. Their voice is critical in any conversation about rights. We also hope the commission would have the ability to hire its own professional experts so it can have the best, most impartial information.

Thank you,