



ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS
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Testimony in support of HB 4041

Task Force on Workforce Development for People with Disabilities

February 8, 2018

Dear Chair Reardon and Members of House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I would like to express our support for HB 4041. Oregon has been a leader in supporting employment of individuals with intellectual and development disabilities (I/DD) through its Employment First Initiative and "I Work We Succeed" campaign. The task force set forth in HB 4041 would help further Oregon's employment initiatives by addressing policies and strategies for increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, evaluate Oregon's programs, and establish state government as a leader in employing individuals who often have struggled to find competitive jobs at prevailing wages, enabling them to work with peers who do not have disabilities.

We recommend that the task force include representation from advocates and the stakeholder community as well as those system partners who are invested in the success of employment in Oregon.

All people, regardless of disability, deserve the opportunity to be full members of their community where they can learn, work and play through all stages of life. We urge you to support HB 4041 to help Oregon develop a comprehensive strategy, along with the services and resources needed to promote the hiring, retention, training and professional development of people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Ramirez

Cheryl L. Ramirez
Director, AOCMHP