

RELAY

RESOURCES®

To: Workforce Committee, Oregon Senate

From: Alysa Rose, CEO Relay Resources

Re: SB 494

Date: February 20, 2019

Chair Taylor and Vice-Chair Knopp, my name is Alysa Rose and I am the CEO of Relay Resources.

Relay Resources is an Oregon 501 (C) (3) non-profit and a Qualified Rehabilitation Facility (QRF). We were established as Portland Children's Center in 1951 and have a long and successful history of serving people with disabilities. Our mission is to create opportunities for people to overcome barriers, achieve independence, and realize a stronger sense of purpose through training, employment and housing.

Relay employs more than 800 people in Oregon. Our employees have the ability and desire to succeed in the work force, but may lack the resources to get there. Most face physical, mental, or developmental disabilities.

An inclusive, integrated, diverse workplace is better for everyone. We know because we have one. Relay's employee base includes people with a wide range of abilities in diverse work environments. Not all disabled people want to work in a workplace with exclusively non-disabled people. Everyone deserves to choose a work environment where they will thrive.

More about Relay

- Relay offers a wide range of jobs from janitorial to landscape to administrative services.
- Relay pays competitive wages and provides competitive benefits including health care.



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EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

- Most of our direct labor employees are unionized. Our nearly 500 janitors belong to the Service Employees International Union and earn competitive wages and benefits according to our collective bargaining agreement.
- Relay puts people at the heart of everything we do and has employed a good jobs strategy to ensure that basic needs of our employees are being met. This goes beyond wages and includes things like scheduling, equipment and safe, secure conditions to work in.
- Relay's worksites include Portland International Airport, Multnomah County libraries, Portland City Hall, Portland State University and other locations throughout Portland. We also hold federal contracts with the Edith Green Building, the 911 Federal Building, Hatfield Courthouse and the Gus Solomon Courthouse as well as the Bonneville and McNary dams on the Columbia River.
- Relay does not hold a 14C license. All our employees are paid at least minimum wage.

In summary:

- People who are experiencing disabilities face disproportionately higher barriers when seeking employment.
- Relay supports the elimination of sub minimum wage for people with disabilities. Minimum wage should apply to employees with all abilities.
- Oregon's Qualified Rehabilitation Facility (QRF) Program is the state's most powerful strategy for creating jobs that support all abilities.
- Relay strongly supports maintaining the 75% ratio requirement because it maximizes the benefit of the set-aside program—creating jobs for people with disabilities. Decreasing the ratio will weaken the program by reducing the number of jobs that are set aside for people with disabilities.
- The decrease in the ratio proposed in SB494 will decrease the number of jobs/job opportunities that are SET ASIDE for people experiencing disabilities.
- Relay supports, in concept, SEIUs proposed language regarding the retention of employees at comparable wages and benefits when set-aside contracts change hands. This helps ensure steady income and benefits for direct labor employees.