

**Sheri Johnson**

Chairs Gelser, Vice Chair Heard members of the committee,

My name is Sheri Johnson, I live here in Salem and I am a former private agency caregiver. I worked for a couple of private agencies for about 3 years but I have been a caregiver for over 20 years.

My testimony in favor of Senate Bill 669 will be brief but I hope persuading.

I am currently a home care worker but I have previously worked for several private agencies and nursing homes. I once held a certified nurse assistant license in Oregon.

It was my experience and assessment that the trainings private agencies offer are not adequate. They do not go anywhere close to preparing inexperienced caregivers with the skills they need to provide the quality care people deserve.

This seems to be an industry driven more by the motto of “profit before people” instead of “people before profit”.

Take for example wages. When I moved from private agency work to homecare through the Oregon Home Care Commission, I earned more and I qualified for health insurance that I desperately needed because of the union contract negotiated by caregivers. Few private agencies offer health insurance and those that do make it unaffordable to most caregivers.

There is a need for private agencies in this industry but they must be held to the same standards as others that pay living wages, provide quality and substantive training to their staff, and offer health insurance benefits.

SB 669 is an important and necessary step to improving the care people in private agency care deserve. Please support SB 669.

Thank you.