

Carolyn Leggett

Chairs Gelser, Vice Chair Heard members of the committee,

My name is Carolyn Leggett, I live in Keizer, Oregon and I was a former caregiver and client care coordinator for a well established private agency in Oregon for 8 years.

I am here in support of Senate Bill 669.

Before working for a private personal care agency I was an EMT in the state of Washington.

It was because of my background as an EMT that I was able to perform the caregiving needs of the clients I was assigned. The trainings they gave me were not enough.

It wasn't just about the lack of training but the lack of effort or make sure that clients' care needs were met or that their safety and welfare were taken into account.

For example, I witnessed how there were clients who refused to use the Hoyer lifts that Medicaid dollars paid for because they had been dropped too many times when the lift was not operated safely by a caregiver trained to use it. I knew of a caregiver with a documented drug problem history that was sent to a hospice client and required to administer liquid morphine. I knew of a caregiver that was fired for refusing to wash dishes instead of for smoking pot inside the client's home. I also once averted a potential severe injury to a hospice client while a bed change was being performed with the client in it.

My point here is not to blame the caregivers. The company knew about these issues. It was their lack of training and an interest in making sure that caregivers had the skills they needed, the lack of oversight and the lack of acting on complaints by clients or caregivers.

I urge you to support Senate Bill 669 because it is an important first step in holding this industry accountable for the mismanagement of care for the people that our society has entrusted them with.

Thank you.