

Mark Meek
State Representative
District 40



House of Representatives

May 2, 2019

The Honorable Sara Gelsler, Chair
The Honorable Dallas Heard, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for HB 3270 A

Chair Gelsler, Vice-Chair Heard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3270 A.

Oregon's adult foster homes provide housing and vital, round-the-clock care to older adults and people with disabilities in small, home-like environments. But adult foster homes in Oregon are on the decline; since 2008, we have faced a net loss of over 150 individual adult foster homes, resulting in almost 700 fewer residents – even as demand for these services increases. Failure to address this issue will lead to more Oregonians being placed in other long-term care facilities which do not provide the same kind of small, intimate environment that adult foster homes provide.

HB 3270 A aims to reverse this trend of adult foster home closures. It will allow certain adult foster homes to care for six or seven residents – instead of their current limit of five residents – and make this model of long-term care more financially feasible. Other states recognize this disparity between declining adult foster home capacity and increased demand for these services; the Washington Legislature this year unanimously approved an increase in adult foster home capacity to allow up to eight residents (HB 1023 – 2019).

Oregon should consider making similar changes – but not without due diligence and careful consideration. HB 3270 A establishes a four-year pilot program through the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) to allow certain adult foster homes to care for up to seven residents. **The intent of this pilot is to be for homes that are licensed by the Adults and People with Disabilities (APD) division of DHS; the intent is not to include homes licensed by the office of developmental disabilities at DHS.** Adult foster homes participating in the pilot must meet all other existing licensing requirements to be authorized for one or two additional residents. In addition to these requirements, DHS must take into account several factors – including the history of abuse complaints and input from the local regulatory authority – before approving an adult foster home for the pilot.

Adult foster homes in Oregon will continue to serve fewer residents if we fail to act – and demand for long-term care will only continue to grow. HB 3270 A is a thoughtful approach to this problem that will help us serve more Oregonians in these small, home-like environments while safeguarding resident safety.

Respectfully,

Mark Meek

State Representative – Oregon House District 40