



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Residential Ombudsman & Public Guardianship Advisory Board

*Joseph Leykam,
Chair
Adair Village
J W Terry, Vice
Chair
Bend*

June 19, 2020

Senator Peter Courtney
900 Court St. NE, S-201
Salem, Oregon 97301

*Jan Friedman,
Portland
Roberta Janssen,
Tigard
Dr. Helen Kao,
Corvallis
Dr. Dwight Mowry,
Ontario
Susan Schreiber,
Portland
Mark Williams,
Bandon
Diana Allen,
Corvallis
Sherry Stock,
Molalla
Allen Hines,
Portland*

Dear Senator Courtney,

On behalf of the Residential Ombudsman and Public Guardianship Advisory Board (ROPGAB), I am writing to voice our support for Legislative Concept 52. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. As you are aware under ORS 441.417 the ROPGAB is charged to advise the governor's office and legislature regarding issues related to Long Term Care and Residential Care.

We ask that you advance LC52, put forth by Senator Gelser, for consideration by the legislature as a bill. LC52 is widely supported by advocates for individuals with disabilities such as Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) and the Oregon Council on Developmental Disability. As advocates for both individuals within the disability community but also all residents of long-term care facilities, we see this concept as a necessary safeguard for the medical care of vulnerable Oregonians.

Reports from The Residential Facilities Ombudsman (RFO) to our board over the last few months have highlighted the limits of medical facilities and the substandard care being offered many residents. Information from the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) and national epidemiology reports of COVID-19 have highlighted the risks to older and chronically ill Oregonians. LC52 is needed to:

- Provide the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) required accommodations to allow support persons to accompany individuals into medical facilities.
- Protect vulnerable Oregonians from being coerced into completing care-limiting Portable Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) in order to receive medical care.
- Reinforce the expectation that Oregonians will not be discriminated against for legally protected statuses of medical condition, disability, or age.

- Direct oversight agencies to enforce legal protections based on all protected statuses to ensure care to all Oregonians without bias on the part of medical providers or systems.

The urgency of this issue is pressing and we understand the short timeline of the special session. We implore you to move LC52 forward for consideration as law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph M. Leykam".

Joe Leykam LCSW, Board Chair

Cc: Majority Leader Rob Wagner, Minority Leader Fred Girod, Senator Sara Gelser