

Support of HB 5019

I am writing to express my support of HB 5019 to increase funding for The Office of Public Guardians (OPG).

I am a social worker that works with vulnerable adults, and in this capacity know the importance of protecting those who cannot protect themselves and are in need of a guardian. Often times these people do not have family or friends at all, or any that are able to step up and serve in this capacity for a multitude of reasons.

On a more personal note, I have a family member who has a guardian through OPG. This individual has intellectual disabilities and is unable to cognitively manage his affairs. He was being abused financially and emotionally and his complex medical needs were not being met. He was not thriving in his environment and was at extreme risk.

Family was unable to provide guardianship for him. He now has a public guardian. With her help he is in a safe, stable home environment (adult foster home), his finances are protected, he is doing well medically and thriving personally. He has gained a lot of important life skills.

He adores his guardian. She respects him and is fair and reasonable in decisions regarding his needs.

There are so many Oregonians also in need of protection. Who have no access to a guardian because there is not enough funding for The Office of Public Guardians to meet the number of requests. While people are lingering on waiting lists, they are at great risk of significant harm being done to them by themselves (for those with limited cognitive capacity) or others who are taking advantage of them. Again, please support HB 5019.

Sincerely, Lauren Slovic, Eugene, OR