



February 10, 2021

Chair Holvey, Vice Chairs Grayber and Bonham, members of the committee, for the record my name is Kyndall Mason; I am a political and policy strategist for SEIU Local 503, focusing on long term care. SEIU represents more than 30,000 long term care workers, in various service settings including people who are aging or have physical or intellectual and development disabilities. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of those workers in an effort to highlight the intersection members of SEIU have with other groups advocating on age discrimination.

The average home care worker in Oregon is a 55 year old woman. For some, this is not a career they chose for themselves, but rather something they found themselves called to do, some simply realized they were the only one around to care for their family/friend/neighbor. Women often leave their jobs to take care of a parent, or even a child. Our members run the gambit in their path to care work. For those who want to re-enter the non-care providing workforce after caring for their loved one, there is a real fear that their age, and perceived gap in resume, will prevent them re-entering at their previous salary if able to re-enter at all.

Age discrimination is real, it's already illegal, but it's so hard to prove. The consequences of it are great. It takes livelihoods from people, and it stagnates a workforce. Oregon needs to be able to point out the real damage from age discrimination and HB 2938 does that. With evidence based research we can understand the impact on a larger scale and hopefully create the will to enforce and if necessary update anti-age discrimination policies.

Thank you for your time on this matter.

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