



March 23, 2023

Honorable Senator WLnsvy Campus, Co-Chair
Honorable Representative Andrea Valderrama, Co-Chair
Joint Subcommittee on Human Services

RE: SB 5525, Support for the Essential Workers Healthcare Trust

Dear Co-Chair Campos, Co-Chair Valderrama, and Members of the Subcommittee,

Avamere Skilled Advisors, also known as Avamere Living, operates as a significant healthcare employer in the State of Oregon. Avamere provides a range of long term care services and supports to Oregonians, many of whom are Medicaid beneficiaries.

As an employer, Avamere is committed to supporting our caregiving workforce with best in class compensation and benefits. We know this is not only the right thing to do by workers but is also a required strategy to ensure aging Oregonians have access to high quality, affordable long term care now and in the future. This is particularly important now as the long term care sector is experiencing an acute workforce crisis coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic and facing a massive increase in the need for services as the Baby Boomer generation enters the period of their life when they need long term care.

Avamere participates in the Essential Workers Healthcare Trust (EWHT), which was established by the Legislature in 2021 through Senate Bill 800. The EWHT offers excellent health plans for our employees at an affordable price, providing workers with the superior healthcare and support they very much deserve. EWHT plan offerings have enabled Avamere to expand the number of employees that are able to utilize our health insurance as well as improved the quality of that coverage. The EWHT is a vital pillar in Avamere's mission to increase recruitment and drastically improve retention of our outstanding healthcare workers. Without this kind of program, absenteeism and turnover threaten to undermine the staff levels at our facilities.

Simply put, EWHT allows us to take great care of those who care for others. **We urge the Legislature to allocate \$30 million in the 2023-25 biennium to continue this valuable program.**

Sincerely,

Andrew W. Loomis, SPHR, SCP
Vice President, Human Resources
Avamere Skilled Advisors