

Submitter: Sarah Ray
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Dear Members of the Oregon Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the current situation of adult foster homes in Oregon. Specifically, I am concerned about the low rates that these homes are receiving and the impact that this is having on the workforce shortage that is currently being experienced in this area.

As you are likely aware, adult foster homes are one of the most affordable long-term care settings in the state and the nation. However, the current rates being paid to these homes, which are less than \$65 a day, are simply not enough to sustain these homes and the caregivers that work in them. In fact, a recent survey conducted by our union found that over 58% of adult foster homes are considering quitting or quitting altogether due to the severe financial strain that they are experiencing.

This is a crisis that cannot be ignored. The aging population is growing, and without significant financial infrastructure improvements, we will find ourselves in a long-term care crisis. The money that is currently being spent on agencies for overhead and group homes is eating away at the budget and is simply not sustainable in the long run.

It is imperative that the state takes action to address this issue. Adult foster homes are on the frontline of the most affordable long-term care settings in the state and the nation. Without these homes, we will find ourselves in a long-term care crisis with the looming boomer population aging.

We cannot continue to underpay these caregivers and expect them to stay. The discrepancies in pay between these caregivers and those working in eight-hour shifts for \$24 an hour are simply unacceptable. If we do not find a way to increase base pay and sustain this valuable program, we will find ourselves in a homelessness crisis.

I urge you to support House Bill 2495 and House Bill 2455 and increase base pay to sustain this valuable program. Capital investments should go to the most cost-effective, long-term care alternatives, which are adult foster care. Please take action to address this issue and ensure that the caregivers who work in these homes are paid a fair wage for the important work that they do.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ray

Chief steward, SEIU adult foster care/ labor relations board. / cape council.