



Oregon
Community
Brokerages

February 7, 2024

To: Sen Patterson, Chair, Senate Committee on Health
From: Katie Rose, Executive Director, Oregon Community Brokerages

Re: SB 1508, prohibiting quality of life measures in state medical assistance program decisions

Chair Patterson and members of the committee,

Oregon Community Brokerages is comprised of the 14 Support Service Brokerages across Oregon. Collectively, we provide case management services to more than 7,500 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in their own or family homes in every community throughout the state. We connect people to what matters to them and support them to make the important decisions and choices that make up a life.

We believe that all human life is equally valuable. People should have equal access to life-improving and sustaining medical opportunities and resources. The concept of Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALY) or the use of “quality of life in general measures” is wholly at odds with these values. As SB 1508 defines, *“Quality of life in general measure” means an assessment of the value, effective-ness or cost-effectiveness of a treatment that gives greater value to a year of life lived in perfect health than the value given to a year of life lived in less than perfect health.”*

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have been systemically undervalued and under-recognized by our society. Supporting people with IDD to be a visible part of our communities helps us heal from this poisonous perspective. When you get to know the lives under discussion, you begin to understand how wrong the concept of a part-life is. Quality of life measures are used as a cost-saving device. We would argue that it comes at too high a cost—our essential humanity.

Oregon Community Brokerages supports SB 1508 prohibiting the use of quality of life measures in Oregon’s decision-making processes for the state’s medical assistance program. These changes to policy align with other historical efforts to ensure that all human lives are weighed equally. We must ensure that our laws, policies, and practices all support this premise.

Now that we know better, we must do better. We urge you to pass SB 1508 and reject medical discrimination in Oregon.