

My name is Shelli Adams

I am an HCW in North Lake county Oregon

I have been a care provider for 42 years but I have been directly working with the state for five years. I am giving the following testimony to show some of the reasons why modernizing our home care system should be a top priority and am asking all of you to pass the Home care Modernization act now.

In 2022 I had to renew my provider number. I did so and it was renewed. It is supposed to be effective for two years but I was only given a one year approval. I spent the entire year contacting the Aging and Disabilities offices, both Klamath and Lakeview, the OHCC, and the DHS. No one could give me a legitimate reason as to why I was only approved for one year and no one fixed the issue so I had to go through the renewal process again in 2023.

During the renewal process in 2023 I spent from January until July contacting all the above mentioned state offices, leaving messages, with no return calls except for the Lakeview Aging and Disabilities office, who could not answer my questions. The OHCC and DHS never called me back and never answered their phones.

I was told multiple times I needed my fingerprints done and multiple times that I did not have to submit my fingerprints for my provider number renewal. In July the Lakeview A & D office told me to have the Sheriff's office do my fingerprints, which I did, but she didn't know whether I needed to send them in with my application or send them somewhere else. She did find out what I was supposed to do with them but the time allotment to ensure my approval would go through before my provider number expired had passed. It was highly stressful to have to worry about being unable to show up for work if my provider number expired due to all the confusion and there is no one to cover my clients if I am told I cannot work.

I was given the address to the background check unit and told to send them there, which I did, four times. The background check unit lost them, three times so I had to pay to be fingerprinted four times. The last time I had submitted my fingerprints to the background check unit and called to make sure they had them and were processing them I was told they had not received them. I asked the person to check and make sure they weren't in their office who told me she was sure they weren't there.

I could hear her TV in the background and knew she was a remote worker so I responded that there was no way for her to know my fingerprints weren't in the office as she was not present in the office, I hear the TV. I asked her to call the background check office and find out about my fingerprints from whomever was in the office. She responded no one is in the background check office except one day a week so she couldn't find out. I asked her to make sure I was called back by whomever was in the office to confirm they hadn't lost my fingerprints again. I was called, they were there and were being processed but they would

not be back in time for my provider number not to expire. I was fortunate they came back the day my number would have expired but my consumers and I should never had to go through the stress and worry about this process.

I started inquiring about having to have my fingerprints done for the background checks in January as I knew there was an average minimum backlog of 6 months for the checks to come back. Since my fingerprints have been in the state and federal systems for 39 years they did process sooner. I was told I had to be fingerprinted for the state, again, because fingerprints change as we age. This simply is not true. It amazes me that any pawnshop in this state can simply run my information, and receive a complete background check in a few hours or less but the State of Oregon is incapable of accomplishing this. Also, I've worked for many companies which background check before employing people and I've never had to pay for this to be done. The State requires the check, the State should pay for it. Lastly on this issue, the new field print system which the state paid for and implemented in order to facilitate the checks faster is not an option for home care workers, in the majority of the state. Especially rural Oregon, since the placement of the offices is inadequate. I would have to drive a minimum of 125 miles, in any direction, one way, to find an office to use their services. Any pay for the trip plus the background check and take time off from work.

I looked into field print and I'm wondering why the State opted to spend a lot more money to put these private businesses in place instead of purchasing the equipment and installing it in every law enforcement office in Oregon?

The second experience I would like to share with you is I recently added a third consumer to my work schedule. I was called by the wife of one of our deputies on behalf of her neighbor. She called DHS and received a list of providers for our area. The Deputies here looked at the list and the supervising deputy immediately crossed off names of those who he couldn't believe have active provider licenses, knowing who they are, and then they background checked the rest of the names. They were shocked at one third of the list that DHS provided are now felons and one third of the list had given up being providers for years. It left three names, mine and two others.

Lastly, I have been trying for a year to get someone to fix my pay. Almost a year ago I noticed that all of a sudden Federal Taxes were no longer being taken out of my pay. No one could say why this happened and as of today it hasn't been fixed.

I feel like the state of Oregon should pay my federal tax bill when it comes in since that is what I will be receiving instead of a return for 2023 as it is their incompetence which is causing me to owe taxes.

The entire Home care set up should be modernized. There should only be one agency in charge of home care so we aren't constantly shuffled from one agency to another and back

again with no accountability and minimal results at resolutions to problems when they occur.

Thank you for listening to my testimony and take action in support of the Home care Modernization Act.