

Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of **Innovation Law Lab** in support of HB 3838 to create a Workforce Standards Board for long-term care workers. Innovation Law Lab is an organization of lawyers, coders and advocates working to advance immigrant and refugee justice.

Care workers provide essential services to seniors and people who experience disabilities. Wages are low for these workers, and many rely on public forms of assistance to survive. Workers often do not have benefits, or cannot afford the ones that are offered through their employment. As a result of this low pay and lack of stability, the industry faces over a 50% turnover rate.

HB 3838 is the solution that will help our state stabilize this important workforce and ensure the best possible services are provided to those in need. The bill will create a workforce standards board that will improve wages, working conditions, and the quality of care. Several other states, including Colorado, Nevada, and Minnesota have taken similar action. Such initiatives have led to better wages, increased training, and improved working conditions.

This bill is also a matter of justice. When federal labor laws were written in 1938, domestic workers—who were overwhelmingly Black women—were deliberately excluded from labor protections to preserve racial and economic hierarchies. Those exclusions have never been fully corrected. Care workers today are disproportionately women, people of color, and immigrants. They continue to experience low wages, and these workers should have a voice on their working conditions.

HB 3838 is a proven and cost-effective solution to stabilize this workforce and improve care for those who need it. We urge your support of this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isaura Peña".

Isa Peña
Director of Strategy
Innovation Law Lab