

February 4, 2026

Chair Kayse Jama

Vice-Chair Bruce Starr

Members of the Senate Committee on Rules

## **Opposition SB 1505 – Home and Community-Based Services Workforce Standards Board**

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Starr, and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in **strong opposition to SB 1505** due to the serious and disproportionate harm it poses to **Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)** and the community-based services they rely on to live with dignity, independence, and self-determination.

### **Unjust Targeting of the IDD System**

We are deeply concerned by an amendment that would narrow the bill's scope to apply solely to the IDD system. This change does not address the core problems with the bill—it amplifies them.

Instead of solving stakeholder concerns, this amendment isolates and targets the IDD community, while leaving unaddressed the bill's structural flaws. It raises the question: Why is the IDD system the only part of Home and Community-Based Services being subjected to this level of centralized oversight?

### **A Board with Sweeping and Unchecked Authority**

SB 1505 would establish an unelected, largely autonomous Workforce Standards Board with authority to regulate wages, benefits, training, staffing, and operational practices across the entire IDD system.

This is an unreasonable delegation of legislative authority, especially given that the services in question are highly individualized and deeply personal.

The bill also fails to account for differences within the workforce. Personal Support Workers (PSWs) are largely unionized, while Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are not. This creates a real risk that a significant portion of the DSP workforce—vital to service delivery—will be unrepresented or underrepresented.

### **Lack of Fair Representation**

The proposed Board includes designated seats for labor, employers, and state agencies—but only two seats for individuals who receive services. This means those most directly affected—people with disabilities—will hold less than 20% of the representation.

Two individuals cannot adequately represent the diversity and complexity of Oregon's IDD community, which includes people with intellectual disabilities, autism, complex medical needs, behavioral health support needs, and a wide range of communication and cultural experiences. This imbalance is particularly concerning given the Board's broad authority.

## **Little Opportunity for Real Community Engagement**

The bill requires only one public hearing before adopting far-reaching rules and standards. That is entirely inadequate given the scope of the Board's power.

True engagement must be ongoing, inclusive, and accessible—not reduced to a procedural checkbox. The voices of people with disabilities and their families must be central, not peripheral, to these decisions.

## **Significant Costs That Undermine Direct Services**

Creating and operating this Board will cost millions of dollars, pulled from a Human Services budget that is already overextended. These administrative costs—covering staffing, rulemaking, investigations, and enforcement—will divert funding away from direct services at a time when unmet needs are growing.

## **A Direct Threat to Choice and Self-Determination**

Oregon's IDD system is grounded in the values of self-direction, person-centered planning, and community inclusion. SB 1505 threatens to erode that foundation by imposing top-down mandates that don't reflect the flexible, individualized nature of these supports.

The bill opens the door to uniform standards that could limit individuals' ability to hire trusted staff, maintain familiar support arrangements, and receive services tailored to their unique needs—even within their own homes.

SB 1505 is the wrong approach. It consolidates power in a Board that does not meaningfully reflect or represent the IDD community, imposes costly new mandates, and jeopardizes the values our service system is built on.

We urge the Committee to **vote NO on SB 1505** and instead support **community-led solutions** that strengthen the workforce while preserving the **rights, voices, and choices** of Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christy Reese  
Executive Director  
FACT Oregon