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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1505

In attending the oral testimony about SB 1505, I noticed one theme common to supporters and those opposed: our fellow Oregonians most in need of support need more. Much of the emotion of the testimony was due to the great need and vulnerability of our intellectually/developmentally disabled. Often mentioned were other disabled groups in the same position of need. It's true that the lacking state governmental funding to support these people needs to be addressed.

That's not what SB 1505 addresses, however. I want to list some ways that passing SB 1505 will help IDD Oregonians:

- Establishing workplace standards will improve the jobs of paid caregivers, reducing turnover
 - IDD clients require well trained caregivers. Without standards of training, caregivers can cause harm
 - Setting expectations of wages, benefits, training, and support will settle questions of what employers must provide workers
 - In the absence of standards, fraud is more likely. Standards of care must be clearly set. A new board will be alert to fraud that takes resources from IDD Oregonians
 - Establishing standards for caregivers provides continuity in services over time. Standards cannot be set piecemeal by annual legislation
 - The diversity of types of care providing organizations can be a strength. This diversity must not make it difficult for IDD Oregonians to evaluate quality of care
 - Decisions about setting caregiving standards should be made by specialized professionals. Legislators do not have the expertise. Employers have competing interests of profit
 - Workers' interests come second to profit motivations within provider businesses, even non-profit businesses. Wage and benefit standards will improve Oregon jobs
 - State standards for wages and benefits is a preferable path to fair compensation. Free market struggle for fair compensation necessarily takes resources away from clients

In the interest of Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and in the interest of those who care for them, I urge the lawmakers of Oregon to pass SB 1505.