

Submitter: Megan Kurz
On Behalf Of: IDD Community and Premier Community Supports
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1505
Senator Jama and Members of the Committee;

Thank you for reading my testimony, and for the good work you are doing to balance the needs of all constituents of the IDD Community in Oregon.

I am writing to strongly oppose SB 1505. Please note that the entire IDD Community is standing opposed to this bill. Adding another costly layer of bureaucracy to services that are already heavily regulated service benefits no one.

The IDD community already has a very engaging process to develop rules and policy. Everyone is welcome. This includes self-advocates, family members, providers and union representatives and state and county officials. Please do not reduce this inclusive process to 11 unelected people making decisions about an industry they don't understand.

This bill will create confusing wage and benefit standards that mean nothing if not funded by the legislature. It also standardized services that are anything but standard, as there are many different IDD services and each is uniquely designed to meet the needs and desires of the person using the service. Do not remove choice and individualism for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Providing Individual Supports in a Person-Centered and customized way to the Person experiencing disability is a CORNERSTONE of Oregon's approach to supporting People.

Providers already pass on any rate increases to their Direct Support Professionals. In addition, we provide benefits such as medical/dental/vision and supplemental life insurance, 401K plan participation, and healthy competitive living wages. This is evidenced by the Rate and Wage study that shows an average wage that is well above what is being reimbursed. The Rate and Wage model also gives you the tools and information you need to fairly increase wages and benefits to a sustainable level. Don't waste funding on a board to tell you this. You already paid for the study.

I urge you; PLEASE vote NO on SB 1505. Do not allow an unelected board to take sweeping control of these services, which significantly impact People's Lives.

Kind regards,

Megan Kurz, CEO

Premier Community Supports