

Submitter: Nicole Owens

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1505

Hello, I am Nicole with Edwards Center, Inc

I'm writing today to urge your opposition to SB 1505, a legislative concept that proposes a Home and Community-Based Services Workforce Standards Board.

Please know that SB 1505 delays, rather than delivers, meaningful wage investment. SB 1505 isn't about increased wages for workers and it fails to prioritize investing directly in wage increases. SB 1505 also provides false wage and benefit standards that mean nothing if not funded by the Legislature.

SB 1505 offers process, not pay, for Oregon's Direct Care Workforce. As you know, the Legislature doesn't need a Board to tell you these wages need real meaningful investment – DHS recently completed a study and published an independent report in 2025 that identified a \$530 million funding gap for home and community based IDD workers – estimating a total investment needed of \$800M in general funds just to bring this direct care workforce to \$23.20 an hour. See APD-ODDS Rate and Wage Study Findings and Recommendations (https://www.healthmanagement.com/wp-content/uploads/Rate-and-Wage-study-plain-language-executive-summary_EN.pdf).

SB 1505 also grants the Board unlimited authority over employment practices and allows an unelected board — not the Legislature — to make new employment and workplace laws for home and community care services and settings. It's a blank check for workplace regulations.

Please vote NO on SB 1505. It misses the mark on raising wages for direct care workers.