

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES
FROM: ELIZA LEAH
DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2026
RE: SB 1505

Chair Jama & respected committee members:

I am an adult foster care home provider in Clackamas County serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities under a DD-2M license. I am writing to strongly oppose SB 1505 and the creation of a Workforce Standards Board.

DD adult foster care homes have been largely ignored in the most recent legislative budget. We do not have the financial capacity to absorb increased staffing costs that would result from this bill. Adult foster homes receive two to three times *less* in service payments than other residential models while often supporting individuals with the same level of medical, behavioral, and personal care needs. Despite providing high-quality, individualized care, we are paid significantly less than 24-hour residential group homes. This funding disparity is already pushing many providers to change license types simply to remain financially viable.

Adult foster care homes also compete directly with larger facilities and 24-hour group homes for the same workforce. This competition already drives wages and benefits upward as providers strive to attract and retain skilled Direct Support Professionals. DSPs have choices in today's labor market, and they will leave positions that do not meet their expectations around wages, benefits, incentives, and workplace culture. I personally pay my staff well above the Portland Metro average because they are highly skilled, cohesive, and essential to the success of my home. SB 1505 would further strain an already competitive and fragile workforce without addressing the underlying funding inequities.

The Legislature has already established a mechanism to evaluate workforce wages through the Wage Transparency Survey. Until those results are received and analyzed—particularly in relation to revenue differences across care models—any discussion of a Workforce Standards Board is premature. Oregon already has systems in place to protect workers. Creating a new board would cost millions of dollars without clear evidence that it would improve outcomes for workers or residents.

Authority over workforce standards should remain with elected officials who are directly accountable to voters. The proposed board would not be elected, would not be accountable to the public, and could be subject to bias, corruption, or undue influence without sufficient transparency. This risks unintended consequences that could destabilize community-based care and reduce access to services for vulnerable Oregonians.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote NO on SB 1505. A Workforce Standards Board is not the answer for our industry, regardless of resident placement. What we need is fair and sustainable funding that reflects the true cost of providing quality care.

Sincerely,

Eliza Leah
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DD-2M Adult Foster Care Home Provider
Clackamas County