

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Fernando Cervantes, and I am a resident of Salem, Oregon. I respectfully submit this written testimony in opposition to HB 4042.

HB 4042 makes significant changes to how child-caring agencies are regulated, expands placement exceptions, and modifies how certain restraints are defined under Oregon law. When legislation affects children in state custody, the standard must be clear and firmly centered on safety.

Expanding placement exceptions and altering statutory definitions risks weakening oversight and accountability. Changes to congregate care limits and restraint language may seem technical, but statutory wording matters. Even small shifts in legal definitions can significantly affect how protections are applied in real-world situations.

Children in state care are among the most vulnerable in Oregon. They depend entirely on the safeguards built into our laws. Any increase in agency discretion must be matched with stronger transparency and clearer guardrails — not broader flexibility.

The authority of the Oregon Department of Human Services is already substantial. If HB 4042 expands discretion without equally strong statutory protections, the risk falls on the children, not the system.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to vote NO on HB 4042.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Fernando Cervantes
Salem, Oregon