



January 22, 2019

TO: Sen. Gelser, Chair, Senate Human Services Committee and Committee Members

From: Leslie Sutton, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Support for SB 274 Expanding choice of case management entity type to youth age 14 and older

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Sen. Gelser and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 36 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equality and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. We also have individual members who are self-advocates and family members.

The DD Coalition believes people are most successful when they have choice and control of their services. This bill allows youth greater control by allowing them to choose brokerage case management services at a pivotal time in their lives - an age when youth are planning for their futures.

Youth experiencing developmental disabilities have incredible transitions at age 18, more than those typically experienced by their peers. Youth must transition from children's to adult disability services, apply for social security benefits, Medicaid benefits, make housing decisions, medical care transitions, and pursue financial independence and assisted decision making supports. Rather than compounding these transitions by adding additional complexity in asking youth to also consider changing case management services, SB 274 ensures youth have the case management support of their choice in time to plan for as smooth a transition into adulthood as possible.

The focus on age 14 in SB 274 follows well-recognized principles that age 14 is the beginning of the "transition to adulthood" life stage where you move from childhood to young adulthood and start planning for life after school.

Oregon has adopted a nationally-recognized framework called "Charting the LifeCourse" as way of planning for the future with a focus on:

- Developing a vision for a good life



- Determining what the person needs to do to accomplish their vision for a good life, and
- Discovering and developing different kinds of supports to help the person reach their goals.

Charting the LifeCourse recognizes that “transition to adulthood” starts at age 14 and goes until age 21. SB 274 matches this definition by allowing youth to choose their case management entity at age 14.

Similar definitions are used at the federal level where age 14 is the age transition programs start in education settings. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is a federally funded program that provides supportive employment and training services through partnerships with education, vocational rehabilitation and human services agencies in each state. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act defines “youth” as starting at age 14.

The DD Coalition supports youth to have a choice of where they receive their case management services. This will help them choose the supports that will take them successfully into adulthood. We know that when people have choice in their lives, they succeed. This will help youth with developmental disabilities succeed in their communities as youth and as adults.