

OREGON TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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Testimony of Arthur Towers

OTLA Political Director

Regarding Senate Bill 97

Before the Senate Committee on Human Services, Mental Health & Recovery

March 2, 2021

Chair Gelser, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in regard to SB 97.

Oregon Trial Lawyers Association members are lawyers who fight for underdogs. We fight for victims of abuse and neglect, and we fight for the rights of whistleblowers who have the courage to stand up to stop wrongdoing.

We oppose the introduced version of SB 97 because it goes too far in limiting victims' access to information when they seek to hold abusive and neglectful caregiving facilities accountable.

That said, we have had extremely constructive conversations with the advocates for SB 97. I am very optimistic that we can meet the needs of all involved and promote a bill that enhances safety and accountability in the care of Oregonians who reside in residential care facilities.

Thank you for the bipartisan questions and comments that were made about preserving victims' and whistleblowers' rights. We are very much looking forward to amendment language that meets your concerns.