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Co-Chair Nosse, Co-Chair Leiber, members of the committee, my name is Kyndall Mason; I am a political and policy strategist for SEIU Local 503, focusing on long term care. Our Local represents more than 30,000 long term care workers, many of whom work in DD group homes, nursing homes and increasingly, assisted living and memory care facilities. Our members provide care and supports for people affected by aging, physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of those members regarding the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman.

SEIU advocates for funding the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsmen on a consistent basis. They have been great allies in the effort to make sure that conditions in various sorts of residential facilities, can provide quality outcomes for residents. As with any agency, we have also seen that the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman has been taxed with expanding work, with so many settings to cover. It is near impossible to keep up with the demand and oversight that is needed in many of these facilities. Yet, they continue to advocate for residents in innovative ways.

The Ombudsman's office has shown itself to be fierce advocates for residents and has included many stakeholders in their multi-pronged approach to managing some of the most crucial issues affecting many Oregonians on many levels. Working backwards from quality outcomes, it has become clear that care jobs being quality jobs, with access to healthcare, quality training and living wages, is one of the factors of in making sure residents can live with dignity and choice.

SEIU is looking forward to many years of collaboration with Long Term Care Ombudsman's office and I hope that you can all see the value in the many programs they oversee. Each of them brings a distinct value set in Oregon's innovative long-term care system and are crucial to propelling Oregon forward.

Thank you for your time today.

Kyndall Mason
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