



March 1, 2022

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Oregon, we express our strong support for Senate Bill 1556.

Unfortunately, the need for home and personal care workers is pressing for Oregon's consumers and families. It is also disgraceful that such essential work is so poorly compensated and remains largely unrecognized. We are, after all, talking about our families, our loved ones and people doing jobs that most of us would prefer to avoid.

It is also the case that most homecare workers are women and a significant proportion of them are people of color. Our history of women and people of color being relegated to low wages and lack of respect is a long one, and the homecare industry demonstrates its frustrating persistence. Establishing a process whereby homecare workers can publicly demonstrate their professionalism, training and scope of work will go a long way towards rectifying these disparities.

A publicly available, standard certification will also foster homecare workers' ability to advance to higher levels of the patient and health care fields. It will also assist them in realizing what additional training opportunities they may wish to pursue, and when and how to transfer that training to jobs in other settings.

The other significant benefit of SB 1556 is that Oregonians seeking home and personal care services will be more readily able to access relevant information that they can use when identifying who would be the best home and personal care worker for themselves and their families. Right now, many of us are not even aware of what kind of training is necessary in any given situation and a standard certification process will go a long way to filling this void.

It is time that those seeking homecare assistance are given the information that will insure that those needing the critical services will actually receive appropriate care. Homecare workers must receive respect and compensation for their hard, often unappreciated work.

We urge your support for Senate Bill 1556.

Respectfully submitted,

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