

February 1, 2022

To: Chair Sara Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Art Robinson, and Members of the Committee
RE: Support for SB 1556

This letter is in support of SB 1556 which will create and phase in a certification process for homecare workers and personal attendants. The part of this legislation that appeals to me is that homecare workers will be able to access their own records which can be useful as they build career pipelines and invest in professional development. These pathways include jobs such as certified nursing assistants, licensed practical nurses and registered nurses. As a former RN in Oregon, I spent years working in long term care. At the time there were no discernable or helpful paths for caregivers to further their education and earning power. So the nursing profession and the long term care industry lost many excellent people who would have made a great contribution as caregivers for our elderly and their families.

In addition, the public certification process can lead to better and more consistent compensation for these challenging jobs. Better wages for homecare workers mean better care for consumers and their families, and demand for these services is on the rise. We live in Aloha and several of our neighbors have used in-home care to enable them to stay in their homes as they age in place. One of our neighbors is 100 years old and receives care from home health staff on a regular basis. As our older populations increase, it is imperative we have educated, licensed and well-compensated staff to provide care where folks choose to receive it.

Thank you.

Penney Hoodenpyle
Member, AAUW of Oregon
Aloha OR