



House Committee on Rules

Testimony in support of SB 99 A-Eng.

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On behalf of our over 500,000 members in Oregon, AARP Oregon strongly supports SB 99 A-Eng. The role of the state is to make sure we not only honor independence, choice, dignity, autonomy and privacy of Oregonians living in long term care facilities, we fully support systems that provide critical safeguards and protections. **Those protections must include older LGBTQIA2S+ Oregonians.**

Oregon has the highest LGBTQIA2S+ population proportion of any state after the District of Columbia. Despite Oregon's commitment to an inclusive state, many LGBTQIA2S+ older Oregonians continue to face widespread disparities negatively impacting their health, financial resilience, and overall quality of life.

We know from Oregon's landmark survey on LGBTQ+ older Oregonians in 2021 commissioned by the Oregon Department of Human Services that nearly 60% of those participating reported having experienced discrimination within the last year, one quarter of that being in residential settings and health care.

While Oregon has not specifically surveyed older LGBTQIA2S+ Oregonians receiving long-term care services, we can be informed by the data in other states, and it is troubling. AARP New York and SAGE's joint report *Disrupting Disparities: Solutions for LGBTQ New Yorkers Age 50+* found that LGBTQ older adults face discrimination, abuse, and neglect by long-term care service providers. **89% of reported discrimination by staff, 81% reported discrimination by other residents, and 53% reported abuse or neglect by staff as significant issues in these facilities.**

SB 99 A-Eng. would create an LGBTQIA2S+ long-term care facility resident's bill of rights to protect residents from discriminatory actions taken by long-term care facilities. This bill specifically includes prohibitions on actions taken wholly or partially based on one's perceived gender identity, sexual orientation, or HIV status such as denying admission, transfer, or discharge requests; inappropriate room assignments for transgender patients; and denying or restricting medical or non-medical care. It would require provider training and establish a subcommittee in the Governor's Commission on Senior Services to examine and address ongoing issues.

For all these reasons, AARP urges this committee to pass SB 99 A-Eng.