



Service Employees International Union Local 503

72,000 public services workers, care providers, and non-profit employees in Oregon.

House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services

RE: House Bill 2500

January 25th, 2023

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services,

My name is Alice Longley Miller and I am here representing SEIU 503 and our Homecare Worker (HCW) and Personal Support Worker (PSW) membership. I would like to express support for HB 2500, which would allow for mileage reimbursement when workers travel 15+ miles to provide in home care services.

HB 2500 would help remove barriers to in-home care for some of Oregon's most vulnerable citizens. Our members consistently raise the cost of travel to and from clients' homes as a financial burden and reason they cannot serve clients in rural areas.

I want to share an example from one of our homecare workers who provides care to a client in Christmas Valley, Oregon. She travels 40 miles each way to her client's house at her own expense because there is no one else available for this person and her services are essential to keeping him in his own home. Often, she spends more on gas than she earns during these home visits because she knows these services are critical to this person's independence. Because of the shortage of care givers, we need to think strategically about removing barriers to care, and HB 2500 is one way to improve access to caregiving, especially in rural Oregon.

Removing barriers to in-home care means people can have the care they need to stay in their homes rather than having to live in more restrictive and expensive settings, like group homes, residential facilities, or nursing facilities. HB 2500 is a simple step we can take to improve access to these vital services, and I urge your support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today,

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