

To: Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama and Members of the Committee

From: Elisbeth Hoyt, APD Eligibility Worker

Date: March 1, 2023

RE: SEIU Member Testimony in Support of HB 2056

Dear Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elisbeth Hoyt, and I am an eligibility worker in the Bend office for the Division of Aging and People with Disabilities (APD). In addition to my job title serving Oregonians, I am a traumatic brain injury survivor and want to provide my family with a quality life. Legislators, **please invest and sustain funding for APD services by supporting HB 2056**. APD services are critical to serve the Oregonians in Central Oregon.

In recent years, the cost of living and food skyrocketed in Deschutes County. With high living costs and health concerns, the elderly and people with disabilities rely on the government for support and protection. For instance, my role with Aging and People with Disabilities impacts our community's livelihood as many of the division's clients are living on fixed incomes.

It is time to collaborate with legislatures to bridge the gap of poverty making it possible for Oregonians to thrive not just survive. The fact is that nearly 90,000 Oregonians access information and services through APD. ODHS staffs 10,000 people working in every Oregon community. In rural Oregon, our district includes Redmond, Prineville, La Pine, Bend, Warm Springs, and Madras. We will be unable find solutions or provide services to Oregonians without proper funding.

My story provides hope for those on disability that it is possible to conquer your dreams as mine was working in government to assist the disabled. I now am Vice Chair and steward in the SEIU union, directing a community food drive for D10, and an eligibility worker that has walked in the shoes as someone who accessed medical and food services after my head injury. My future is bright with possibilities, and I am here to inspire our clients to be empowered and independent to dream and live a quality life.

Please invest and sustain funding for APD services by supporting HB 2056.

Thank you,

Elisbeth Hoyt