

Submitter: Gerald Cohen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB1508

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden and Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Gerald Cohen and I reside in Lake Oswego. I write in support of SB 1508. My background is in law, bioethics and advocacy with and for those deemed most vulnerable; fields I have engaged in for over 45 years as an advocate, educator and trainer. I was appointed to the Oregon Resource Allocation Advisory Committee established under the Oregon Health Authority in late Spring 2022. The Committee met virtually every month from May 2022 until July 2023. The Committee recommended changes in both language in the Principles OHA previously published prior to the pandemic as well as substantive procedures and materials regarding how Oregon should prepare for and respond to "Resource-Constrained Events". In other words, how resources are "rationed" during a crisis (this could be a natural disaster, pandemic or human-made situation such as a mass shooting, etc.).

The original language and approach were overtly ageist and ignored health justice considerations. Values and language matter and the vast majority of our diverse Committee has recommended an approach that neither penalizes/assumes age in and of itself is a care issue nor that a label of "disAbility" should be considered as well in treatment decisions.

No one's life should be valued by such criteria of age or ability.

Thank you for your consideration and support of SB 1508