

**Providence Health & Services**  
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February 7, 2024

The Honorable Deb Patterson  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health Care  
900 Court St., NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Senate Bill 1507 — Access to public guardians

Dear Senator Patterson and members of the committee,

Providence Health & Services is guided by a Mission of caring that the Sisters of Providence began in the Northwest more than 160 years ago. As an organization driven by our Mission to serve the poor and vulnerable, Providence fundamentally believes that access to health care is a basic right. As such, we have supported efforts to ensure all Oregonians have access to health care and advocate for solution-oriented policies that serve the needs of families in our communities, and the long-term economic success of Oregon.

Many of Oregon's most vulnerable individuals - those suffering from chronic or intermittent cognitive impairment and lacking capacity to make their own health care decisions – are required by Oregon law to remain in a hospital until a private or public guardian can be identified. We recognize that a lack of available public guardians for patients who are incapacitated represents one of many significant challenges facing hospitals in discharging patients with complex needs to appropriate post-acute care settings. In our ongoing commitment to partnering with others across the state in addressing hospital discharge barriers and in ensuring patients receive the right care in the appropriate setting, we fully support legislation that addresses assessing and assisting with guardianship needs.

We recognize how guardianship is a major civil legal barrier that impacts health for the poor and vulnerable, and would like to extend our appreciation, support, and partnership in identifying strategies and best practices around advance care planning and guardianship in SB 1507.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Olson".

William Olson  
Chief Executive – Oregon  
Providence Health & Services