

SB 1507

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to express my support for SB 1507 and in asking for your support. My name is Charity Damesworth and I have previously worked in Oregon in human services as a Trust Officer with Veterans Affairs, and currently work as Administration Support for the Oregon Public Guardian's office (OPG). I have a bachelor's degree in human services, been certified in guardianship since 2016, and feel very strongly about advocating for those of vulnerable populations.

I ask for your support in expanding the OPG program as I have seen the positive impact it has already had on giving a voice to those that would not otherwise have one. Many aging and people with disabilities are not able to clearly or effectively advocate for their own wishes and are exploited regularly. Those with funds are able to hire representation for those needs but OPG has been serving those that do not have those funds to hire those private entities. We all know the list of those that need those services greatly outweighs the number of current resources.

Oregon has pioneered standing up for those who have the odds stacked against them in receiving an equitable life. I ask for your support in expanding a program that clearly shares this same passion for advocacy and helping those individuals to have a better quality of life. The expansion of this program would lead to more individuals receiving advocacy and help to reduce the waiting list.

Thank you for your consideration and I commend you for helping to be part of the solution for vulnerable populations here in Oregon.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, followed by the date "2/8/24" also written in blue ink.