

February 8, 2024

RE: support of SB 1507

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

I appreciate the opportunity to express my support of the expansion of the Oregon Public Guardian (OPG) program under SB 1507. I am writing to you today as a citizen, though I have also been an employee of the program since September of 2018 and in the field of public guardianship services for 15 years come April of this year.

While there are many issues facing vulnerable populations in Oregon (e.g. housing challenges, food and income insecurity, exploitation), for those Oregonians who are truly incapacitated and without other resources, the Oregon Public Guardian program is often the last hope for survival, much less an opportunity for a decent life filled with dignified choices.

I have seen firsthand the amazing progress an individual under guardianship with an advocate at their side can make towards a better future: A future off the streets; a future free of victimization, abuse, and neglect; a future with potential for contentment, healthier relationships, and vocational, educational, and recreational opportunities to explore their hopes and desires.

For incapacitated Oregonians as well as our hospitals and communities serving them, one of the greatest challenges is the lack of expedient guardianship services. If OPG is provided funding to expand capacity (and thus speed up the waitlist and processing of referrals), many more at-risk citizens could be served and the strains on our systems lessened.

In order to best assist incapacitated Oregonians, please fund an expansion of OPG under SB 1507.

Sincerely,



Sarah R. Bosma
Bend, Oregon