



Senate Committee on Health Care
Monday, February 12, 2024

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Alice Longley Miller and I am submitting this testimony on SB 1565 on behalf of SEIU 503. SEIU 503 represents thousands of Personal Support Workers (PSWs) who provide support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at home and in community settings, including children.

We are working with the parent advocates supporting this bill and Senator Hayden to recommend a small amendment which would ensure parents have more choices about what service delivery model works for their families. When SB 91 passed last session, it included a harmful provision where parents cannot be PSWs and must be employed by a DD agency. This is especially unfortunate because other states are setting up paid parent programs through the self-directed or participant directed service model option because the administrative costs are lower than the traditional agency delivered service model.

Furthermore, embracing the flexibility offered by self-directed supports and Agency with Choice models not only promotes family autonomy but also aligns with fiscal responsibility. By avoiding the imposition of the most expensive service option on families who may not require the level of support provided by private agencies, the state can optimize resource allocation and ensure that taxpayer dollars are utilized efficiently to meet the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities.

The amendment seeks to ensure that parents have access to Oregon's self-directed supports model, which is currently only the PSW Model. This amendment includes provisions to address concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest. Specifically, a paid parent PSW would not act as the "employer of record" but could still serve as a PSW under the condition that another individual assumes the role of employer of record. The department could also require that a paid parent designate an alternative legal representative for the child to oversee or manage the child's individual support plan. These provisions mirror existing provisions outlined in SB 91 for agency-employed parents.

It is worth noting that the legislature is currently deliberating on SB 1521, which mandates ODDS to implement the Agency with Choice model by 2026. We advocate for explicit recognition within this bill that parents may be employed by Agency with Choice Providers once this model is established. Agencies with choice can implement robust oversight and

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training mechanisms to ensure program integrity and provide support systems for parents.

We appreciate the willingness of the Chief Sponsor and the stakeholders involved in SB 1565 to draft the aforementioned amendment to address our concerns. We believe that this amendment will uphold the principles of choice and autonomy for families while safeguarding the integrity of support services for individuals with disabilities.

Thank you,

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