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On Behalf Of: Or St Cn for Retired Citizens-United Seniors
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure: SB1591

Opposition to SB 1591, Increasing Maximum Residents in Adult Foster Homes,
Senate Human Services Committee, February 14, 2024

I am Dr. Jim Davis, representing the Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens and United Seniors of Oregon, state affiliates of the National Council on Aging. We want to express our strong opposition to SB 1591, which would remove the current Adult Foster Home (AFH) resident limit of five and allow for an increase to seven residents to reside in adult foster homes. We feel this is an irresponsible policy for AFH residents.

Senior and disability advocates have been opposing this type of legislation for decades. We understand that there are financial concerns with AFH operators, but such a significant policy change on the AFH resident maximum could potentially have grave effects on patient care. Any increase in resident limits needs to be more fully studied in a stakeholder-involved process, especially before initiating such an impactful change in AFH policy, as it is currently written. The adult foster home industry has made no attempt to reach out to senior and disability advocates about changes in AFH resident levels.

The Adult Care Home concept in the Oregon model is based on keeping seniors and people with disabilities out of institutions and in their own homes or "home-like settings" for as long as possible. Caring for more than five adults who have long term support needs is beyond what might be considered a "home-like setting". The greatest potential impact will be how staffing is affected. With more residents, there will be an obvious need for additional staffing, yet the legislation doesn't require staffing changes. In addition, to accommodate this policy change, it would require either larger homes or residents doubling up in rooms, far less privacy, meals that would be less than "home-like", and many other restrictions that would greatly affect care.

SB 1591 moves adult foster homes toward becoming "mini-institutions", which was never the intent of the pioneers that helped develop the adult foster home model. The true historic irony is that some advocates and providers decades ago thought even the current 5 residents to be excessive when adult foster homes were developed in the 1980s.

We need to stay faithful to the home and community-based system that we dreamed of 40 plus years ago, and find other economic solutions to the business needs of

AFH providers, including additional increases in reimbursement rates, which we strongly support. AFHs need to be adequately reimbursed, but SB 1591 is not the way to accomplish that goal, nor does it make sense to even consider such bad policy.

We strongly urge you to oppose SB 1591. We need a much more comprehensive stakeholder conversation before such a major and damaging change in policy be initiated in our national model community-based long term care system.