
OREGON Fire Marshals ASSOCIATION

February 14, 2024

Senate Committee on Human Services
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Concerns with Senate Bill 1591

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson, and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Fire Marshals Association thanks you for the opportunity to express our opposition to SB 1591. Adult Foster Homes serve a valuable role in our long-term care system for vulnerable Oregonians. Oregon has a well-established regulatory system, including building, fire, and life safety codes that are based on the current definitions of an adult foster home serving up to five residents, and a residential care facility serving six or more residents.

Adult foster homes currently have the option to serve more than five residents by obtaining a Residential Care Facility license, which contains the appropriate life, safety, and operational requirements for serving larger numbers of seniors and people with physical disabilities. If Oregon is going to increase the number of residents in an adult foster home by 40%, then resident and provider safety must be thoughtfully considered.

Adult foster homes typically offer services in a single-family residence, which may also serve as the residence of the owner or manager. As such, the adult foster home rules require the home to comply with the state and local fire and safety regulations for a single-family residence. Adult foster homes therefore do not require routine fire and life safety inspections to ensure the continued safety of the residents and providers.

Residential care facilities must comply with extensive and detailed fire/safety and evacuation requirements consistent with a facility that cares for more residents. This includes the requirements for fire sprinkler and alarm systems that provide for a greater level of fire and life safety for residents and providers. Additionally, residential care facilities are required to obtain a routine fire and life safety inspection and correct any noted deficiencies to maintain licensure.

Regards,
Shawn C. Olson
Legislative Committee Chair

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