



February 11, 2025

To: Chair Gelser-Blouin, Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Em Braman, Executive Director, The Arc Oregon

RE: Support for Senate Bill 794

Chair Gelser-Blouin and Committee Members,

On behalf of The Arc Oregon, I am writing today to express our **support for SB 794**. For over **70 years**, The Arc Oregon has provided advocacy, support, and services to people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. We envision a world in which all persons have the support and opportunities they need for personal development and independence, interdependence with family and friends, and inclusion in the community.

As a provider of less restrictive alternatives to guardianship, we at The Arc Oregon understand the necessity of these services in Oregon. The lack of availability and access to these services places people with disabilities at increased risks, which may compromise their health. Many Oregonians with disabilities have no family, friends or other supports that can step into the roles to support decision making and do not need the full support of a guardian or conservator. We support the Oregon Public Guardian providing these less restrictive alternatives so more people in Oregon can access decision making support.

It does concern The Arc Oregon that the language around Supported Decision Making will no longer be in the bill. Supported Decision Making allows a person who needs decision-making support to access people who can provide that support yet leaves the decision-making authority in the person's own hands. This is a less restrictive alternative to guardianship that is being added to state statutes across the nation, allowing people with disabilities the autonomy, dignity, and self-determination to be in control of their lives.

Please support SB 794 to ensure that more people in Oregon have access to appropriate decision-making supports.

*Achieve with us.*