



Disability  
Rights  
Oregon

TO: Senate Human Services Committee  
FROM: Emily Cooper  
DATE: February 21, 2025  
RE: SB 937 DRO Support

Dear Chair Gelser-Blouin, Vice Chair Linthicum, and members of the Senate Committee

Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) submits this testimony in support of Senate Bill 937 providing \$350,000 to the Oregon Foster Youth Connection.

Disability Rights Oregon filed a class action lawsuit in 2019 due to our concerns regarding the rights of foster youth. Foster youth often have a hard time even knowing about their rights much less how to navigate systems of care. Expanding the capacity of the Oregon Foster Youth Connection will provide additional advocacy and support to these youth who often just need a light to illuminate the path in front of them. Notably, expanding peer support will increase the number of youth who become familiar with their rights and refine their self-advocacy skills, which will only maximize their independence and quality of life.

Disability Rights Oregon (DRO). For more than 40 years, we have served as Oregon's federally authorized and funded Protection & Advocacy System. DRO is committed to ensuring the civil rights of all people are protected and enforced. In recent years, DRO has settled [a class action lawsuit](#) regarding the Department of Human Services failure to provide appropriate services to foster youth with disabilities.

If you have any questions regarding DRO's position on this legislation, please call Ben Gurewitz at 971-806-7908 or email him at [bgurewitz@droregon.org](mailto:bgurewitz@droregon.org).