



TO: Senate Human Services Committee
FROM: Emily Cooper
DATE: February 21, 2025
RE: SB 875 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 875 clarifying the rights of children while in foster care.

Disability Rights Oregon filed a class action lawsuit in 2019 due to our concerns regarding the rights of foster youth. SB 875 does two critical things:

- 1) in section one and five, it makes clear that foster youth will have access to their current and future siblings unless a Court enters an order that such contact be limited due to safety concerns. One of the greatest sources of grief and separation anxiety from foster youth, is the lack of contact with their siblings. SB 875 allows those relationships to continue when safe and appropriate.
- 2) in section three, expressly includes other legal rights youth currently have regarding to be free from inappropriate seclusion and restraint, confidential access to their attorney, freedom of religion, and to have their belongings move appropriately with them.

DRO supports SB 875 as it protects and promotes the rights of foster youth including maintainig their relationships with siblings.

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 bgureiwtz@droregon.org.