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February 27, 2025

House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services
Oregon State Capitol: 900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97302

Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 3224

Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of House Bill 3224. My name is Rachel Hansen, and I am a Political Strategist for SEIU Local 503. Our union represents thousands of in-home and facility-based workers who provide critical services in home and community-based programs and adult foster care settings across Oregon.

SEIU has been an active participant in conversations about background checks this session and in past sessions, and we view House Bill 3224 as an important step toward continuing our work to make Oregon's background check system more efficient and streamlined.

It is important to our state, to the people who receive services, and to workers, that Oregon has a background check system that works. Unfortunately, every day, we hear from members who struggle with the complexities of the current system. Workers are required to submit multiple forms, track numerous dates, and navigate inconsistent requirements depending on their role or program. Workers report extended timelines to complete the process, lack of communication about whether they've passed their checks, and excessive paperwork. These unnecessary barriers delay workers from entering the workforce, ultimately postponing the provision of critical services that vulnerable Oregonians rely on.

The lack of program portability—where background checks are not necessarily shared or recognized across programs—further complicates the process. This inefficiency not only harms workers but also disrupts continuity of care for consumers.

House Bill 3224 provides a path forward in seeking to address these issues by requiring the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) to review all instances of required background checks, identify similarities and differences, and propose solutions to consolidate and streamline processes. This analysis is a crucial first step toward building a more equitable and efficient system.



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This effort aligns with SEIU 503's longstanding advocacy for a universal provider number (UPN) and "Rap Back" for background checks, to simplify administrative processes, improve workforce mobility, and reduce confusion for workers who provide care across multiple programs. But to achieve this, we must evaluate the credentialing and background check requirements that currently exist. In 2015, Senate Bill 774 encouraged ODHS to implement a single online application and assign a universal provider number, regardless of program. However, nearly a decade later, this reform has yet to be realized. House Bill 3224 provides the foundation for the UPN by requiring ODHS to conduct a thorough review of existing statutes and deliver data-driven recommendations.

We all want to live in a care economy where providers and state workers spend less time navigating redundant processes, agencies save resources by eliminating duplicative administrative work, and, most importantly - workers can focus on what they do best—providing high-quality care to Oregonians in need. House Bill 3224 is a significant step toward removing barriers to employment, improving access to care, and building a system that works better for everyone.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge the committee to support this initiative and look forward to working together to achieve these important reforms.

In unity,

Rachel Hansen
Political Strategist, SEIU Local 503