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To: Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services
From: Bridget Buddill, Legislative Advocate at the Oregon Law Center
Re: Senate Bill 1065 – Center for Decision-Making Supports
Date: March 11, 2025

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

The Oregon Law Center (OLC) is a legal aid organization providing free, civil legal services to low-income Oregonians. We write in support of Senate Bill (SB) 1065, which establishes the Center for Decision-Making Supports (CDMS) within the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

The CDMS will be an education and information hub offering resources on guardianship, alternatives to guardianship, and supported decision-making, among other issues, to Oregonians with disabilities and their families. The bill defines supported decision-making as, “an individualized process of supporting and accommodating an individual who is an adult with a disability to enable the individual to make life decisions without impeding the individual’s self-determination.” In supported decision-making, the individual seeking assistance retains all decision-making authority, as compared to a guardianship, where another person, often a family member, is given some scope of legal, decision-making authority on behalf of the individual. Whether either of those paths, or something else, is right for an individual is entirely person- and situation-specific.

For members of our client communities with disabilities, the addition of the CDMS would fill an important resource gap for people who want to know what options are available to them in assistance with decision-making, what those options mean in terms of levels of autonomy and self-determination, and how these factors would contribute overall to their short- and long-term goals. Simply put, the CDMS will empower more members of our client communities with disabilities to make better, informed choices for themselves about key events in their lives.

Thank you for your consideration; we hope you will support SB 1065.

Sincerely,

Bridget Buddill

The Oregon Law Center’s mission is to achieve justice for low-income communities in Oregon by providing a full range of the highest quality civil legal services.