



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Public Guardian and Conservator

830 D Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

Office: 503-373-6848

Toll free: 1-844-656-6774

Email: opg.info@rights.oregon.gov

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To: Chair Gelser Blouin and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee

From: Chris Rosin, The Oregon Public Guardian & Conservator

RE: SB 1065

Chair Gelser Blouin and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Public Guardian Program (OPG) is the guardian of last resort in Oregon. We provide services only when there is no other option available to help a highly vulnerable adult with cognitive disabilities that is at high risk of harm or death without decision making supports. This includes no other available alternative guardian able and willing to serve and no less restrictive alternative to guardianship that could help. Even with these limitations, OPG is overburdened with more referrals than we have the resources to process or serve. Unfortunately, all too often an individual is referred to OPG for services because an alternative plan for decision making support was not put into place at a time when the person was able to authorize such a plan and now the person is in a very bad situation that could have been prevented by such a plan. A Center for Decision-Making Supports would help more individuals as well as families supporting their loved ones to develop these plans so that OPG services would not become needed.

Additionally, supported decision making (SDM) is the least restrictive form of decision-making support. Many other states utilize supported decision making within the spectrum of available supports, but SDM is not currently defined under Oregon law. By providing a working definition for SDM, SB 1065 would help solidify it as another important available option for Oregonians in need of some level of support.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information about the proposed Center for Decision Making Supports and supported decision making.