

NewHorizons

Every Care. For Everyone.

March 14, 2025

House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Elmer, Vice Chair Munoz, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ali Dean, Chief Care Officer for New Horizons In-Home Care. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of New Horizons in opposition to House Bill 3838. New Horizons is a locally-owned home care agency serving Oregon for over 30 years. We employ over 3000 Caregivers and serve over 3200 Oregonians. Our clients include medically fragile children, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and seniors. We have 17 offices in Oregon including in rural communities along the coast and in Eastern Oregon. The vast majority of our clients' care is Medicaid-funded. There is a shortage of Caregivers in every community we serve and we have had to be innovative in how we recruit and retain them. We offer competitive wages and benefits. We also provide unlimited CNA scholarships and intensive in-person paid training with three months of ongoing mentorship for new hires. We offer gas bonuses to caregivers who serve rural clients and pay differentials for working with clients with complex needs, behaviors, or environments. Our recognition program grants financial rewards to caregivers and our lively online community allows them to connect, share, and celebrate one another. These benefits help us retain a skilled, compassionate workforce, despite the financial constraints we face with a limited Medicaid reimbursement.

We're proud of the work we've done, but we fear that HB 3838 would stifle innovation, limiting our ability to offer caregivers the support they want and deserve. We use a third party satisfaction research firm to survey our employees on a monthly basis. For years we have been studying survey feedback and engaging with our workforce to improve retention and care quality and we will work tirelessly to make continued improvements. However, we believe the opportunities for improvement can be found within our organization, not by a new regulatory body with far-reaching authority who doesn't know our team and the unique challenges they face serving such a diverse population across Oregon.

Additionally, the bill introduces significant regulatory concerns, proposing a new regulatory body with powers that mirror a state agency—an unprecedented level of authority for our sector. Medicaid In-Home Care Agencies are already held to rigorous standards set forth by ODHS, OHA, BOLI, and OSHA. The compliance burden, confusion, and costs would be immense and we worry it would limit our ability to continue offering flexible, creative solutions for recruitment and retention. This would ultimately affect access to care, especially in Oregon's rural communities. Rather than creating a new body with such far-reaching authority, we urge the committee to consider strengthening existing frameworks that support home care providers and workers. We want to continue providing high-quality



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care, but we need a regulatory environment that supports us, not one that restricts our ability to innovate and serve our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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