

Submitter: Jeffrey Wellington

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3838

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a long-term care administrator as well as the owner of River Terrace Memory Care. River Terrace is a 54-bed memory care in Oregon City, and I am writing to ask you to please vote "No" on HB 3838, which would create an expensive, unnecessary, and over-reaching workforce standards board for all home and community-based care facilities and organizations in our state.

I have been an administrator in the healthcare arena for over ten years. Prior to my healthcare career I worked as a social worker for fourteen years. I have a master's degree in social work. During the first four years of my healthcare administrative tenure I worked as a nursing home administrator. Roughly six and a half years ago my father, Steve, and I purchased River Terrace Memory Care. We brought on the management company, Caring Places Management almost seven years ago to oversee the community. We are long-term owners most interested in delivering consistently top-notch care. As an example of my commitment to excellent care, I have personally worked as a caregiver or medication aide on NOC shift over 50 shifts during my time as administrator at this community. I have also worked on day or swing shifts.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3838. I am a healthcare leader that enjoys cultivating a team of professionals (nurses, caregivers, medication aides, housekeepers, managers, activities, dietary) who creatively solve problems, which ultimately leads to better care of residents and a more vibrant workplace for employees. I believe that HB 3838 will stifle that goal because it will place far more burden on the team to respond to oversight. Below are some of the innovative items that we have put into place to drive excellent care.

- Two years ago we partnered with Optum, a Medicare Advantage program, that allows for a nurse practitioner to come to River Terrace weekly and also on-call 24 hours 7 days per week. Participants in the program also have access to a dentist, podiatrist, optometrist and audiologist. This is far better than relying on a primary care provider that is in a distant office who does not see the memory care resident in their own environment.

- Partnered with a nurse practitioner who started his own practice and visits River Terrace on a weekly basis. This nurse practitioner is a primary care provider and serves over thirty of our residents. This nurse practitioner is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. His work has allowed us to much more nimbly address the clinical needs of residents.

-Partnered with a physical therapist who developed a device to help residents maintain strength and balance. Our activities (life enrichment) team are using the devices combined with his videos to work with our residents. Exercise within a memory care environment is very important to reduce the likelihood of falls. To support my goal of developing a strong team I have consistently focused on compensating team members at a top level as well as consistently following up on concerns and issues. As a result, we have a very low turnover rate and staff's commitment to the residents is very high.

Beyond this point this bill will raise costs for Medicaid providers and Oregonians paying for care out-of-pocket, create a massive new regulatory body that will complicate and duplicate an already confusing regulatory system, and violate employees' personal privacy. The proposed board is completely unnecessary to improving care and workforce outcomes and puts many facilities at risk of closure while also reducing access and affordability for seniors who need care.

While I adamantly oppose this bill, the bill has been proposed due to some reason(s). My team and I are very good problem solvers. I welcome the opportunity to engage more and learn how I might assist in solving the problems.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely

Jeffrey Wellington, Administrator/Owner
River Terrace Memory Care