

Submitter: Ali Brown  
On Behalf Of: Pathway Enterprises Inc  
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3838

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Munoz, and members of the committee,

My name is Ali Brown and I am the Chief Operating Officer for Pathway Enterprises, Inc. We are a nonprofit Medicaid agency that provides services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Jackson and Deschutes Counties. With over 15 years of experience in this field, I have seen firsthand the challenges facing our workforce and the individuals we serve.

I am writing in strong opposition of HB 3838. While well-intended, this bill fails to address the root cause of the workforce crisis – insufficient funding – while creating additional operational hardships. As a provider of home and community-based services, I know firsthand how critical it is to support and retain our workforce. However, this bill does not solve the real problem; it only adds financial and administrative burdens to providers without guaranteeing the necessary funding to implement changes.

Providers across the state have been actively advocating for increased Medicaid reimbursement rates so we can pay our employees a living wage. The independent HCBS study commissioned by the legislature identified a \$530 million funding gap for community provider organizations alone. Instead of addressing these rates, HB 3838 creates a workforce standards board that will mandate higher costs without providing any new funding. For Medicaid-funded providers, this means an impossible choice: we will be required to increase wages and benefits without the resources to do so. The result will be service reductions, program closures, and an even worse workforce crisis for the individuals who rely on home and community-based services.

This will not only strain providers but will also leave vulnerable Oregonians without essential care. If we truly want to support the direct care workforce and ensure quality care, we must increase Medicaid reimbursement rates – not impose new unfunded mandates.

I urge you to oppose HB 3838 and instead prioritize sustainable funding solutions that strengthen Oregon's long-term care system and truly support the workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration.