Good afternoon, *Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Elmer, and members of the committee, my name is Lisa Hilty, and I am here today on behalf of Sapphire Health Services in **opposition to HB 3838.***"

Sapphire Health Services serves over 1400 senior and disabled residents in assisted living and skilled nursing communities in Oregon and Washington and employs over 1500 staff members. Our assisted living communities are honored to serve over 400 elderly and disabled residents in Oregon every day, of whom 355 or 88% are funded by Medicaid.

I am proud to operate in rural and urban areas across the state in districts 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. In several Oregon areas, we are the only care community available.

Our company shifted and reacted swiftly during Covid. When everyone was quarantined in their homes, we were innovating ways to keep our essential workforce safe and in our care settings to provide critical support to our vulnerable population. We quickly responded with increased wages, added bonuses for our teams, created well-being benefits, deepened our tuition benefits, all to keep our buildings operating. If we compare our care staff wages from before Covid to now, we have increased by over 30%

We are a growing and innovative company; however, HB 3838 will stifle our innovation and will delay our ability to raise workers' wages and benefits for years while the board is set up.

HB 3838 requires this board to set staffing standard**s**, but this bill does not account for, nor align, with the new State Acuity Based Staffing Tool (or ABST) that was implemented last year. This new ABST, which all communities have implemented, already mandates the minimum staffing required, for each day, and each shift, based on the data entered into the ABST for each resident. Additionally, there are Oregon Administrative Rules that also set minimum staffing requirements, as well as spell out the required training and return demonstration of competency for our staff.

We are opposed to HB 3838 because it is duplicative in all its targeted efforts and will cost money that is not budgeted.