

Submitter: Elise Dixon

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3838

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the Committee,

Please vote YES on HB 3838 to establish a Workforce Standards Board in the Home and Community-Based Care Industry.

I am a home health speech-language pathologist, and I have worked professionally alongside many incredible home and community-based care workers.

These workers play vital roles in their clients' lives, providing essential medical and personal care services to individuals who need ongoing assistance with daily activities, encompassing both physical and social support. The therapeutic work I do is largely made possible by care workers who help clients implement my recommendations on a daily basis. Yet these workers are largely overworked, underrecognized, and underpaid.

Care workers, who are 80% women and predominantly people of color, face severe economic hardship due to meager wages. Half of care workers must rely on public assistance, and 41% live near poverty despite many positions being funded by public dollars. While Oregon urgently needs 65,000 more care providers by 2030, current conditions make it one of the hardest positions to fill and retain workers.

HB 3838 will help care workers have a voice in setting industry standards, access to fair wages and safe conditions, and protection from retaliation. Oregonians' healthcare is dependent on implementing policy to make these jobs more desirable and sustainable for workers, who put so much of themselves into this demanding, essential work.

Please vote yes on HB 3838 and stand with the workers who keep our care system running.

Sincerely,
Elise Dixon
Portland, OR