

## **Testimony for HB3838 Submitted 3/17/2025**

Esteemed Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Elmer, Vice-Chair Muñoz, and Members  
of the House Committee Labor and Workplace Standards,

As someone who has been deeply involved in the provision of affordable housing and long-term care in Oregon for more than 40 years I can say that this legislation would make a difficult job even more difficult. Thus, I strongly urge you to vote NO on HB 3838 for many reasons. But central is the extreme difficulty providers are having meeting ever increasing requirements without much thought about adjusting rates for Medicaid clients for which the State already has trouble finding sufficient appropriate care situations. Please also note that in licensed settings staffing levels are already tied to acuity, meaning employers must adjust frequently to assure they are meeting mandated levels. This also doesn't recognize the financial difficulty the vast majority of older adults experience is paying privately for care when they do not qualify for Medicaid. All workers deserve to be compensated, but this bill does not recognize the extreme difficulty in recruiting and retaining workers, the cost of mandated training, and the extreme shortages in the workforce across the board for all professions. Candidly I do not see the logic of imposing one more barrier for employers to successfully compete for the limited supply of workers. I wonder how much factual information is available about what it actually takes to recruit and retain workers in today's environment.

In my view HB 3838 is bad policy that will destabilize an already fragile sector, taking away a community's ability to make employee-related decisions based on resident needs, workforce realities, and financial constraints. Instead of strengthening the workforce, this bill will worsen staffing challenges by adding unnecessary bureaucracy, increasing costs, and diverting focus away from providing care for older adults. I can only wonder why as much energy isn't being put into strategies to recruit and retain older workers (55+) who already make up to 50% of the workforce in some sectors.

This bill imposes more regulations and gives sweeping authority to a board with the potential for inadequate oversight, limiting providers' ability to operate, raising costs for older adults, and putting housing and long-term care providers at even more risk of closure just when demand is poised to explode given the permanent changes in the State's age structure that are well under, especially in rural communities.

HB 3838 will not help caregivers or residents. Please vote NO on HB 3838 to protect older adults and their access to care.

Respectfully Submitted

Keren B. Wilson PhD