

Submitter: Patti Caswell
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3838

Written Testimony in Opposition to HB3838
Patti Caswell

Good Afternoon Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the Committee—

I am writing to you today as a parent of an adult with developmental disabilities. My son lives at home in a supported environment and relies on a brokerage to hire and manage professionals who provide his care. We are fortunate to have access to the support he needs, but I know many families are not as lucky.

When we relied on Personal Support Workers (PSWs), it was extremely difficult to find workers willing to take on these roles. Even with a brokerage assisting us, staffing remains a challenge due to workforce shortages and low wages. HB 3838 does nothing to address this fundamental issue.

After listening to and reading testimony from others, it is clear there is widespread misunderstanding about what this bill will and will not accomplish. HB 3838 does not focus on improving care for individuals receiving services; rather, it centers on workers. Many have testified about concerns regarding the quality of care in facilities, yet this bill neither addresses nor intends to address those issues.

Instead of creating another oversight board—one that will divert valuable resources without meaningfully improving conditions for workers or families—the Legislature should focus on real solutions. Direct care professionals perform difficult, essential work, often in private homes, requiring skill, patience, and dedication. Yet, their wages are comparable to menial labor jobs. People pay someone to clean their home more than the hourly wage provided to a careworker with 25 plus years of experience. Without better compensation, recruitment and retention will remain in crisis, leaving individuals with disabilities without the care they need.

How will this board address the realities of caregiving? Who will enforce “working condition standards” in private homes? This bill offers no tangible solutions—only the appearance of action. If it passes and leads to the closure of foster homes and residential facilities due to staffing shortages, the consequences will fall on this

committee.

I urge you to reject HB 3838 and instead prioritize securing adequate funding to ensure that direct care workers receive fair, competitive wages. That is the only way to improve conditions for both caregivers and the individuals they support.

Thank you for your time and consideration.