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March 18, 2025

House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Testimony In Support of HB 3838: Home and Community-Based Services Workforce Standards Board

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Muñoz & Elmer, and members of the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards,

I am proud to submit testimony supporting HB 3838, establishing the Home and Community-Based Services Workforce Standards Board.

Oregonian's population is aging. In June of 2024, deaths exceeded births for the first time in Oregon's recorded history.¹ Oregon's home and community-based care workforce has not kept up with Oregon's aging population and has left gaps in care for these individuals.

49% of direct care workers rely on public assistance, such as Medicaid, food stamps, and cash assistance.² There is a 51% annual turnover in direct care jobs, leading to instability in care.³ These workers deserve a voice in shaping their industry and the care they provide. A workforce standards board sets industry-wide standards that give workers a voice in improving wages, working conditions, and care quality.

¹ Economic & Revenue Forecast, June 2024, <https://www.oregon.gov/das/oea/Documents/demographic.pdf>

² Direct Care Workers in the United States: Key Facts 2024", PHI, p.10.

<https://www.phinational.org/resource/direct-care-workers-in-the-united-states-key-facts-2024/>

³ 2023 Quality Measurement Program Report for Oregon Community-Based Care Facilities", Oregon Department of Human Services, p.8.

https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/de-526552_23.pdf

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A workforce standards board will help close racial and gender gaps⁴, and ensure all care workers have fair wages and workplace protections. States like Colorado, Nevada, and Minnesota have established Workforce Standards Boards for care workers - raising wages and improving working conditions.⁵

Establishing the Home and Community-Based Care Workforce Standards Board will bring employers, consumers, government, and workers together to set fair wages, benefits, and training standards to ensure stability in the workforce. Employees, employers, and the Oregonians being cared for deserve this stability.

I urge the committee's support of HB 3838.

Thank you,

Andrea Valderrama
State Representative
HD 47 (Outer East Portland)

⁴ David Madland and Alex Rowell, “Combating Pay Gaps with Unions and Expanded Collective Bargaining” (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress Action Fund, 2018), available at <https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/combating-pay-gaps-unions-expanded-collective-bargaining/>.

⁵ Larson, Tyler, LPRO Analyst. “Data on Oregon’s Agricultural Workforce and Background on State and Local Wage Boards,” November 18, 2024,. available at <https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/combating-pay-gaps-unions-expanded-collective-bargaining/>.