



To: Joint Subcommittee on Human Services

From: Andrea Kennedy-Smith

Date: April 2, 2025

RE: ODHS HB 5526

Dear Co-chair Valderrama, Co-chair Campos, and members of the committee,

My name is Andrea Kennedy-Smith, and I am writing in support of the Governor's investment in both the Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) programs to continue to focus on prevention as well as home and community-based care as an ongoing priority.

SEIU 503 supports the following POPs:

- POP 101 Strengthening Safety and Regulatory Oversight
- POP 103 Access Rule (CMS)
- POP 114 Person-Centered Service Planning and Workload model
- POP 560 Ensuring access to services for individuals with mental health conditions

I have worked for the State of Oregon, Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Program for the last 18 years in Washington County. I am a member of SEIU Local 503 and am the President of Local 200 which represents ODHS and OHA employees. We serve Oregon's most vulnerable populations and require appropriate staffing and funding to meet those needs.

Investments in regulatory staffing for APD and I/DD ensure that Oregonians remain safe and receive the appropriate level of care. This includes additional operations funding to implement the new CMS access rule, which has a critical focus on home and community-based services. Workers already carry heavy caseloads, and, without additional workers, these vulnerable populations may experience slower services.

The budget includes funds for positions to enable review for newly licensed or changed ownership community-based care facilities. The budget reallocates Quality Care Fund resources to support provider workforce training and Safety, Oversight and Quality

operations. The budget also reallocates mental health funding to enhance access to long term services and support for individuals with behavioral health conditions.

In summary, adequate staffing levels and proper training is critical to serving vulnerable Oregonians. Please support investments in APD and I/DD programs.

Thank you,

Andrea Kennedy-Smith