

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3838

I have been a DSP for 32 years, all with the same company, OSLP in Eugene. I am in absolute support of having this Standards Board become a reality. For far too long, I have attempted to engage with "stakeholders" to create change and embrace evolution, only to discover the inherent failure of such a journey in the face of Status Quo Bias and entrenched power rooted in the ego of individuals who have carved out their place in the present system.

It is well beyond time for the voices, perceptions, and experience of workers, employers, and people receiving services to have direct input into the rules governing the work we're doing. It is our vision that can guide agencies in their rules, oversight, and enforcement, in partnership with Oregon governance. This board would not be "duplicative," as the opposition claims, it would be inclusive. For the first time, the conversation would involve people doing the work, to further the work. In concert with state government, it will be possible to transcend the well-meaning but tired bureaucratic mechanisms that are not fulfilling the mission people such as myself wish to pursue.

This is an opportunity to have the visionaries, those with imagination and ingenuity, to hold court in a meaningful venue to further their concepts throughout the state instead of possessively containing advancements within their organization. Mentorship opportunities are possible, to learn from each other to advance concepts of care to a level only dreamed. But first, things must be opened to change. Existing agencies are barely keeping up. People are suffering. Working truly together in this proposed mechanism will have challenges due to the complexities inherent in the industry, and I believe that Oregon can and will rise to those challenges.

Opposition fears are just that. Fears. Their concerns should be met with solutions but should not be allowed to manifest prevention in moving away from our current way of doing things. How well are the current systems working? Turning in circles may amount to a high step-count, but it literally is no progress. In the committee prior to this, fears were expressed that it would "limit our ingenuity." It sets minimum standards, not maximum ones. It would actually highlight the creativity and find pathways to assisting other providers to grow in concept and application of better practices. There's the fear that it is organizing for the union... well, I am a member of SEIU 503, and though I hold my membership quite dear, I would not force this on anyone. If an employer is actually good to their employees, it is unlikely the workers would unionize... if not, then perhaps it is a fear to be reckoned. Frankly, union density in the industry would benefit all, including employers (once they were able to

reconcile their ego with the loss of unilateral power).

It is important to know that the care industry is complex. This bill affords that differences must be acknowledged. It is not, as the opposition fears, a "one size fits all" approach. It is seemingly dichotomous, because it is about establishing uniform standards. This is not a singularity, it is about defining things in terms of what they are: recognizing individual needs, but in a collective sense about how it all works together, and what details must be addressed. You see, in care, being person-centered is paramount. That is our voice in this process and would translate much better than ideas from only the bureaucratic perspective. It is not to replace the government and agency purview, but to enhance it and nuance it into something far more effective in what we say it is that we do.

Please, give this new way a chance. The old way must be challenged, from my experience over time, and the growth I've experienced, it is essential. Let Oregon become the beacon for the world on the provision of care.