



*Oregon's Voice for Long Term Care & Senior Housing*

11740 SW 68<sup>th</sup> Parkway Ste. 250  
Portland, OR 97223  
Office: (503) 726-5260  
[www.ohca.com](http://www.ohca.com)

February 8, 2018

To: Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, members of the committee

From: Phil Bentley, Sr. Vice-President for Government Relations

Re: Testimony on Senate Bill 1534

On behalf of our in-home care agency members, we submit the following testimony regarding **Senate Bill 1534**.

There are two primary types of in-home care providers in Oregon. The first type, in-home care agencies, are typically small businesses that are licensed and regulated by the Oregon Health Authority. The second type, home care workers, are represented by SEIU and subject to oversight by the Oregon Home Care Commission at DHS. Both of these caregiver groups provide valuable services to low-income Oregonians.

In-home care agencies are required to ensure their caregivers meet specific training prescribed by Oregon law. The training requirements vary based upon the level of care being provided to clients. However, caregivers employed through the Oregon Home Care Commission currently have no training requirements. A recent state audit highlighted the need to improve the training and supports for state home care workers. Senate Bill 1534 directs the Department of Human Services to develop these important training requirements for Home Care Commission workers, which we strongly support.

In addition to establishing minimum training requirements for state home care workers, Oregon should strengthen and align our long term care workforce around a common mission of meeting the growing need for these services. Workforce shortages are already the biggest challenge facing our members — especially care providers in rural communities — and these challenges will only become more pronounced as the baby boomer generation enters their 80s.

SB 1534 represents a step forward in providing quality care to seniors and people with disabilities and supporting the workers who provide these valuable services. This bill should also be the start of aligning our state training requirements across care settings and enhancing the career opportunities for the dedicated individuals who care for our most vulnerable.

We look forward to participating in the process that will produce the specific training requirements at the agency level and partnering with other stakeholders to help grow our long term care workforce.

*The Oregon Health Care Association is the largest long term care trade association in Oregon and represents more than 900 organizations statewide including licensed in-home care agencies, nursing facilities, assisted living and residential care communities, senior housing organizations, and business partners.*