

Submitter: Delinda Free

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services

Measure: SB1591

As a person who has created working relationships with Adult Care Homes in both Clackamas and Washington Counties in the role of Primary Care Social Worker, I understand the value of AFH care to older Oregonians on Medicaid. We are frequently searching for ACH openings for our vulnerable folks, and we appreciate the high level of care that these amazing folks provide. The invaluable setting of a home-like environment for people with serious illness and at end-of-life is a resource that most members of the community overlook, but when it is needed and a vacancy can't be found, it can contribute to suffering due to prolonged hospital stays.

Per conversations with senior finder agencies and ACH owners themselves, rising property values in some places such as Deschutes county have led to the numbers of ACH's going down. This is devastating for the communities that pride themselves as retirement communities, and some families have had to uproot and move to Portland metro area just to find appropriate care for family members. If ACH's were able to take in more residents, they would be able to meet increasing demand, employ more people from the communities, and also afford to pay rising property costs, as well as living wages for the owner/operators. I'm in support for allowing ACH's to house more residents if the space requirements and caregiving capacity meets the criteria.