

Talking Points – Care Power Lobby Day

SEIU members, CareWorks and Care@Work activists are calling for game-changing investments in Oregon’s long-term care system, which is facing a crisis as the population ages and the industry rapidly expands.

A legacy of racism and sexism casts a shadow over jobs that were once written off as “woman’s work,” and to this day the long-term care system is underfunded and under supported.

Care jobs should be good jobs

- Training, wage increases, health and retirement benefits will help lift workers out of poverty while improving outcomes for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Care providers should have equitable pay, benefits, training and union rights across the long-term care sector.
- More than 30,000 homecare and personal support workers in SEIU 503 are making care jobs good jobs, and the 16,000 private agency-employed home care workers should have the same standards.
- Workers should have rights and consumers shouldn’t be left without support when a private home care agency moves or is forced to close.

Independent living

- Choice, independence, and dignity are the pillars of Oregon’s long-term care philosophy. Everyone should be able to live independently in their own home with support from a care provider if they choose.

Smart investments at DHS

- Staffing at DHS needs to improve. With current caseloads, it’s impossible to implement needed improvements across the long-term care system including in licensing and enforcement
- Unreasonably high caseloads are negatively impacting Oregonians across the long-term care system -- consumers, case managers, and workers.

Career pathways

- State governments regulate wages, align training and certification standards, and invest in jobs all the time, such as in the construction industry. Investing the same way in long-term care would lift a large industry of women and people of color, whose jobs cannot be outsourced or automated.

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