

# Long Term Care Systems and Funding at the Political Forefront

## Campaign for Oregon's Seniors & People with Disabilities

There's some excitement in the air. The January 09 legislative session is going to be a time when Oregon's long term care programs takes center stage at the Capitol. As workers in homecare, nursing home, adult foster homes and private homecare agencies know, Oregon's system of long term care, touted as the best in the nation, is supposed to fulfill a promise to provide independence, choice and dignity for vulnerable seniors and people with disabilities. In fact our system has been neglected and abused by lack of funding, innovation and creativity.

That's about to change. Our union is joining forces with some of the most influential groups who advocate for long term care services, like AARP, O4AD (Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging), Oregon Healthcare Association and about 33 other advocacy organizations. Together, we are forming a platform to reinvest in the following:



### Maximizing Medicaid Access

- to reinvest in fair, sustainable reimbursements for Oregon's long-term care providers
- to expand eligibility criteria
- to provide adequate resources to support caseworkers and field staff so they can function more efficiently

### Strengthening Oregon's Aging and Disability Resource Infrastructure

- Fund programs like Oregon Project Independence (OPI) and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- Invest in community supports, like affordable housing, special needs transportation and Aging and Disability Resource Networks to help ensure more livable communities

### Ensuring Quality Care by Recruiting and Training a Qualified, Stable Workforce and Investing in Family Caregiver Supports

- Provide adequate training, compensation and benefits
- Invest in increasing nursing home staffing

- Create a quality-care fund, funded by license fees and civil monetary penalties currently lost to the state's General Fund
- Provide respite programs to support unpaid family caregivers

**Candidates for Oregon legislative office will be asked to support this platform. And as homecare workers, there's something every one of us can do to support this effort.**

1. If you are not registered to vote at your current address, **DO IT! Register to Vote. The deadline is October 14th.**
2. Be an educated voter. Our union will be provided lots of information prior to the November election on the candidates and the ballot measures. Read! Ask questions! Come to a local regional meeting to join in the discussion with co-workers.
3. And then vote as your job and your client's services depend on it!
4. In January, be prepared to visit the Capitol, to be visible and vocal!

This will be our time. We can make it happen!