Oregon DD Coalition | Advancing Opportunities

March 3, 2021

To: Sen. Patterson, Chair, Senate Committee on Health Care

From: Katie Rose, Chair, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition
Leslie Sutton, Policy Chair, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Support for SB 567, declaring as unlawful practice the denial of treatment that is likely to benefit a patient based on that patient's disability

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The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 38 organizations and individuals across Oregon that advocate for and promote quality services, equality, and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. Our members represent advocacy groups (including self-advocacy organizations), family peer supports, DD residential providers, DD supported employment providers, and Support Services Brokerages.

When we seek medical help, we enter into a trust relationship with medical personnel, presuming that the professionals we encounter will make recommendations that enable us to recover and thrive to the fullest extent possible. SB 567 seeks to assure this trust remains sacred by making sure that the personal biases or views of medical providers do not factor into treatment decisions.

The pandemic and subsequent shortage of resources we have experienced over the past year has stressed our medical care system, demonstrating that legal support and definition is needed to secure equitable and excellent medical treatment for all Oregonians. Unfortunately, Oregonians with IDD have a history of experiencing discrimination, coercion, and lack of access to healthcare, which has only worsened because of the pandemic.

SB 567 seeks to assure that information related to a host of factors, including disability status, cannot influence the following decisions:

- Denial of medical treatment to the patient that is likely to benefit the patient based on an individualized assessment of the patient using objective medical evidence, and
- Limitation or restriction in the allocation of medical resources to the patient.

SB 567 would also require that medical providers work with the patient, the patient's family, and others authorized to act on behalf of the patient in determining whether medical treatment is likely to benefit a patient. This assures that all available supports that a person relies on to make important decisions are welcomed to participate in this most critical juncture.

This legislative concept is not about chastising medical providers; it is about supporting a system under stress to make good choices in difficult moments for all Oregonians.

We urge you to provide medical professionals with clarity and support to make the right choices for people in their care. Please pass SB 567, to ensure that all Oregonians can expect equitable treatment and high-quality healthcare.

Thank you.