

Dear Oregon Senators,

Please oppose HB710.

Although well intended the bill is poorly written and will result legal challenges brought forth by the Autism community as this bill forces the immediate closure of Applied Behavior Analysis service providers leaving more than 10,000 families with children diagnosed severely with Autism without any placement or therapy services in the state of Oregon, including my daughter Amara.

As a stakeholder and as a parent of a child diagnosed with Autism which this bill is supposed to protect-- I oppose the bill:

- 1) Requiring a BMI index is discriminatory and if the bill is passed, will most likely result in legal challenges.
- 2) Requiring the layer of physician's approval is barrier to service and is not realistic and cost prohibitive.
- 3) The definition of restraint needs to be written by BCBA's and the current definition may result in legal challenges.
- 4) Aim High Impact and other ABA services providers directly affected by closure of this bill need substantially more time for their input in writing a bill that actually protects children diagnosed with Autism.

Why is opposing HB710 so important?

My daughter Amara is just one example of an Oregon child diagnosed with Autism. Amara was adopted from Ethiopia at the age of 5 months and now she is 12 years old and wears pretty beads in her dreadlocks.

Amara has had several failed Oregon public school placements (Lane county, resulting in a lawsuit and WA county) and also one failed private school placement where due to the fact that she is severely diagnosed with Autism and has aggressive behaviors she has required restraints in the past, so I support the need for a HB improving protective restraints in Oregon public schools.

I cannot support HB710 as it targets service providers, like Aim High Impact located in Beaverton, Oregon where Amara receives 1:1 Applied Behavior Analysis by trained and qualified BCBA's from 9:00-4:00 Monday through Friday - year round.

Impact Alm High is a rare, unique and state of the art program, where care is taken to vet employees and NOT weigh them. They determine after careful review and assessments the best BCBA to work with each child.

Impact Alm High already adheres to Oregon laws and United Health Care's reporting requirements as well as following best practices and my parent scrutiny of Amara's progress. Amara has only had 4-5 incident reports where contact was needed and all incidents were handled appropriately and Aim High is so effective at what they do, Amara rarely needs a physical prompt.

Amara has attended Aim High Impact for 3 years which is her longest placement. Amara has made substantial progress at Aim High Impact including following directions, reducing aggressive behaviors, improving communication and self toileting. This is extremely well documented for insurance purposes.

If HB710 passes, Impact Alm High will be forced to close and I will have to move Amara out of Oregon to find another high quality and effective ABA service provider.

Meanwhile Amara will regress on a daily basis as will thousands of other children now at home without a therapy placement.

Like many families we have spent thousands of dollars on therapy and insurance co-pays only to see the investment in therapy - vanish.

Additionally, HB710 puts special needs children back into homes where caregivers cannot support violent behaviors placing a higher burden on DHS and endangering children's lives.

Please oppose HB710 until the stakeholders, constituents and Autism service providers can provide the appropriate language to realistically protect Amara.