

From: Dr. Allison P. Hobgood, DEC Board President and concerned citizen
For: Disability Equity Center (DEC is in Corvallis, OR)
Re: Senate Bill 584

Senate Bill 584 *absolutely* will improve lives of Oregonians with disabilities by eliminating asset and income eligibility restrictions to Medicaid for employees with disabilities. If enacted, the bill will require the Oregon Health Authority to provide medical assistance to employed individuals with disabilities without regard to individuals' income or resources.

Health equity for all Oregonians means all Oregonians have an equal opportunity to prosper through their employment, despite their disability. Too often many people with disabilities must decide between health care and work. Medicaid asset and income restrictions unjustly penalize workers with a disability who need long-term supports and services. By restricting a disabled employee's ability to earn and save, the State has closed all pathways to prosperity in the best-case scenario, and indentured that family to poverty in more difficult circumstances. The employed Oregonian with a disability, who buys-in to Medicaid for the long-term supports and services they need to thrive, can never take a pay raise, even if they merit it, without risking losing their health benefits. *These policies are regressive and discriminatory against people with disabilities.*

In order to be eligible for long-term supports and services through Medicaid Buy-In, an employed Oregonian with a disability must limit their countable assets to \$5,000 and income to less than 250% of the Federal Poverty Level, which is \$32,000 for a family of 1 or \$55,000 for a family of 3.

For our State to achieve the State Health Improvement Plan Healthier Together Oregon goal of health equity for all, its elected leaders must listen to the plea of those affected by systemic discrimination and make changes that promote economic opportunities for all, including people with disabilities. **Please support Senate Bill 584!**