

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Knopp, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to share my support of SB 584.

This important legislation gives Oregon's elected leaders an opportunity to uplift Oregonians with disabilities, like myself, by removing a layer of systemic oppression. Among the diverse disability community, a common concern that resonates within is how we must decide between contributing to the workforce, being allowed to marry, and having access to health care due to archaic assumptions about disability. We are a unique population that has to navigate how becoming a tax-payer or how achieving career advancement can lead to unjust penalty and loss of vital health care.

While this bill is specific to the Medicaid "buy-in" program eligibility for workers with disabilities, it really sets the tone for our how our state views the lives and livelihoods of Oregonians with disabilities. How is it empowering or encouraging to restrict a disabled employee's ability to earn income, excel in their field, and save money? What message does that send to children with disabilities who dream of their futures?

Medicaid asset and income restrictions unjustly penalize disabled workers who need long-term supports and services. These services are often what enable independence and employment.

Modifying the Medicaid eligibility requirements for employed persons with disabilities will set our state up to achieve health equity for all.

Our goals and dreams are no different than yours. Please support Senate Bill 584.

Thank you,  
Christine Getman