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March 1, 2021

Senate Committee on Health Care

Testimony of Tobi Rates in support of SB 355 and SB 358

Dear Chair Patterson and members of the Committee:

My name is Tobi Rates, and I reside at 8306 NE Thompson St, Portland, OR 97220. I am here in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Autism Society of Oregon and as the mother of two children on the autism spectrum.

The Autism Society of Oregon is in support of SB 355 and SB 358. We believe that it is important for autistic people to have access to medical care for autism including but not limited to Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy if they so choose. The additional protections that are in these bills are important and are long overdue. Complaints need to be tracked to protect vulnerable people. As the mother of a nonverbal autistic child, I know how uniquely vulnerable our kids can be. Even a verbal child or adult is not always able to communicate when abuse has occurred.

The Autism Society of Oregon is the largest autism advocacy organization in Oregon and the only one that operates state-wide. We represent everyone affected by autism, including individuals on the autism spectrum and their families, across the autism spectrum and throughout the life span. Our mission is to empower these individuals to improve the quality of their lives through resources, education, advocacy and support. Over 9,000 children are identified as having an autism spectrum disorder in Oregon. Their families access ASO as a resource throughout Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this Committee.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tobi Rates".

Tobi Rates
Executive Director