

January 23, 2023
Senate Committee on Human Services
Senate Bill 420

Good afternoon, Chair Geslar-Blue-In, Vice-Chair Robinson, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you regarding Senate Bill 420.

My name is Dr. Jonathan Wilson, and I am the Chief Research Officer for Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL) and EOCIL's Institute for Disability Studies and Policy (IDSP). Based in Ontario—with additional offices in Pendleton and The Dalles—EOCIL serves clients in 13 eastern Oregon counties: Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler. And as such, it is IDSP's opinion that Senate Bill 420 would have significant benefits for people living with brain injury in eastern Oregon.

Senate Bill 420 would create service coordination, offer options counseling, advocacy, and mostly importantly resource navigation to individuals living with brain injury in rural and frontier eastern Oregon. Our research team believes this action will result in:

1. Increased brain injury community awareness.
2. Increase screening by both government and community-based organizations.
3. Increase early brain injury diagnosis.
4. Increased linkage to treatment and support services.
5. And decrease institutionalization in the correctional and late-life stage critical care systems.

The IDSP research team then concludes that the passage of SB 420 has the potential to improve educational outcomes and service accessibility, prevent incarcerations and institutionalization, and enhance eastern Oregon's independent living program for all demographic categories of persons with disabilities.