

Submitter: Paige Hall

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services

Measure: SB646

Hi, my name is Paige Hall I'm a registered voter in Eugene. My son is James, he is 11 years old and was diagnosed at age 3 with drug resistant epilepsy and non verbal autism. Our biggest struggles before getting into the temporary paid parent caregiver program we're giving James consistent and reliable care, helping to maintain James' physical and mental health and securing financial stability and keeping housing without state assistance.

In the last 6 years of James having state paid care he has had 6 caregivers including myself. The first four were unreliable and inconsistent with their work ethics, attendance and communication. They all left without notice and caused James a lot of mental and emotional distress and in turn caused him to regress in his life skills, self confidence and physical health. I have interviewed a total of 8 other potential caregivers who agreed to work with James only to be told later that they felt they couldn't handle his medical or behavioral needs (if they care back at all.) The process of interviewing, training and trusting new caregivers is incredibly stressful for the entire household and adds even more onto a full plate of responsibility that is overflowing.

With myself as James' caregiver he has seen a growth in self confidence, mental and physical health and overall better school performance. He has been able to create and have a consistent and reliable daily routine and weekly schedule. He gets out into the community and interacts with his peers on a daily basis. He has had no inpatient hospitalizations and less seizure episodes due to a decrease in stress from having better quality medical and daily care.

Since becoming James' caregiver I have found a way to become financially stable and no longer need state assistance programs to get by. It takes a lot of stress off my plate when I do not have to worry about housing(of which homelessness is a possibility if this program ends), groceries and other basic necessities James does need. I'm able to be a better caregiver to my son knowing I have a steady income, that he receives safe and reliable quality care and it creates a more positive home environment for James to grow in.

I want to thank you for your time and support on allowing parents of disabled children in Oregon to become paid parent caregivers and SB 646.