



February 3, 2023

Submitted via Email: Sen.DebPatterson@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Deb Patterson, Chair
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: **SB 191 with -1 Amendment– SUPPORT As Amended**

Dear Chair Patterson:

I am writing on behalf of the Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD), the world's largest organization treating autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the nation's fifth largest non-governmental organization contributing to autism research. CARD contracts with Medicaid managed care in multiple states to provide services to thousands of individuals of all ages.

CARD submits this letter in **SUPPORT** of SB 191, which would establish an alternative appeals process for Medicaid beneficiaries that mirrors the process in place for their commercially insured counterparts, making Oregon's Medicaid program more equitable and ensuring its beneficiaries access all medically necessary treatment. Today's fair hearing process is intimidating for many families who view the process as a court procedure. Often, families will decline to pursue a fair hearing, but we do not experience that hesitation with privately insured individuals who initiate the appeals process proposed here. When a Medicaid beneficiary does appeal, a coverage decision is made by a judge who is unlikely to have any relevant clinical expertise. This bill would give Medicaid beneficiaries the option to have a clinical expert review a health plan's denial, ensuring that Medicaid beneficiaries will not be deprived of medically necessary care. Access to medically necessary treatment maximizes individual outcomes and minimizes costs across a beneficiary's lifespan that are typically borne by the state.

Thank you for your commitment to the health and well-being of all Oregonians. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please consider me a highly accessible resource for your staff and you. I can be reached via email at J.Kornack@centerforautism.com.

Sincerely,

Julie Kornack
Vice President, Government Relations

Cc: Senator Cedric Hayden, Vice Chair

Senator Daniel Bonham

Senator Winsvey Campos

Senator Chris Gorsek