

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story with the committee.

My name is Kathleen Hansen, and I'm a board member of the coalition for patient rights and I am a patient advocate for those with rare diseases. I myself suffer from Ehlers danlos syndrome, which is a genetic condition progressive where My body falls apart at a much faster rate than most.

I am in favor of supporting SB 607, pain patients have really been taking a beating the last few years since the CDC came out with the guidelines in 2016 the pendulum swung in the opposite direction and put us all in the category of drug addiction. It's been horrific to be perfectly honest so many people I know that were functional and able to get by, taking care of their families going to work are no longer able to do so. Doctors are dropping them left and right threatening them telling them that they can no longer be taken care of due to their need for pain medication.

Pain management has turned into a joke. It's essentially injections and braces and tens units which can help for some mild things, but certainly not for the vast majority that is struggling with significant issues, for myself, I've had over 30 surgeries across my body, including seven brain surgeries two spine and two neck. I had a recent experience where my shunt failed and was causing severe brain pain, and it is one of the most difficult types of pain to treat after frequent ER visits, both my surgeon primary care, and the ER all agreed that I needed stronger medication, and I was honestly scared because I didn't want the stigma attached to me even though I couldn't function I couldn't even breathe. I was crying in the waiting room, unable to parent unable to work the kicker was once they agreed on adding me to a larger dose of medication I couldn't find a pharmacy that could fill it because manufacturers had decided they're not producing that level anymore. It took a call to six pharmacies to find one, and my insurance automatically denied it Medicaid without even reading the prescription which we found out that following Monday it took several hours and a lot of back-and-forth but eventually the \$420 prescription was covered and I was able to be myself again while awaiting another major surgery

My ex-husband wasn't so lucky he had a failed ankle surgery. This was his fourth in 2022. His pain management postop was very minimal and he struggled Immensely the toll it took on his mental health, and eventually our marriage and lead to the end of it. they refused to treat his pain and told him it was in his head , and as he started to accept that fact, he learned that actually his fusion never healed and his pain was rightfully so they eventually put him on stronger pain medication months after the anguish, and then, as OHSU's policy is to not prescribe opioids, they tried to move him over to belbuca. Unfortunately, that drug is only approved by Medicaid for coverage for people with opioid use disorder which my ex-husband did not have it took months of back-and-forth with the state and eventually he was able to get it, but it was horrific the symptoms and side effects from the medication made him terribly ill, and it was very ineffective for the pain he was experiencing. He eventually tapered himself off, but not at

the cost of becoming incredibly sick himself, and losing even more functionality. He was suffering from skin crawling sensation, vomiting, stomach aches and diarrhea on top of increasing anxiety and depression. He was scared to go back to the doctors because they treated him like a drug addict.

it's not just about having access to pain medication. It's about what not being in pain does for those around us, the ability to care for your family, the ability to show love to another the ability to care for your child, the ability to get up and feed yourself. These are things that patients have been losing for years and are unable to care for themselves, losing their homes their families, their spouses their children.

we're asking the commission to be investigated because there are members that are using their position in power to force patients into the same category as addiction and we are not addicted. We are reliant upon a medication that has been proven overtime to help, the education that pain medication increases pain over time has been disproven the education about that everyone is addicted to them it has been disproven. There is a big difference between being reliant, or dependent upon a medication and being addicted, such as someone who needs insulin, they are not addicted to their insulin. Their body requires it to function just as ours do to get through the day I have been on and off pain medication most of my life and I have never experienced addiction. In fact for me I like to get off the medication as quick as possible and it has gotten me in trouble in the past because I taper too quickly postop as it causes severe G.I. distress, this latest surgery I am on the highest level of pain medication I've ever been on and even with that I have been able to taper more safely this time without any side effects.

I am asking for the state to protect us. right now patients are foregoing life-saving surgeries because they're only allowed three days of pain medication, postop regardless of the procedure. I'm talking about patients that are requiring brain surgery being told that they will be given the exact same level of pain medication. They were on prior to the procedure, which does nothing these patients are screaming and crying at home in horrific pain suffering with terrible PTSD, and scared to go back, doctors are scared to take on these patients. They are feeling forced into compliance while they know what's best, The fear of retribution is so great that they are unable to do anything differently SB607 needs to happen. We need to have a checks and balance, and we need to have more patient voices on that commission. There is not a single non addicted intractable pain Patient voice on the current pain commission. Please stand up for us, and stop the barbaric treatment we are enduring both physically and mentally.

Thank you.
Katie Hansen