

Submitter: Kristen Tobias
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure: SB1016

I am requesting your support for Senate Bill 1016, which directs the Department of Human Services to establish and maintain regional family support networks for families of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This bill is scheduled for a public hearing this Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 3pm.

The Family Networks have worked to support the commitment of ODDS to assure people with I/DD, like my incredible Autistic son Wes, can live lives that are fulfilling, meaningful and self-directed. Families are often the first teacher, and children who have the right support grow into thriving adults that are self-determined, independent, and resilient.

To date, the Regional Family Networks support 20 counties in Oregon, which represents 76% of the state's population. Networks cover vast geographic areas, both urban and rural in an effort to support families from diverse locations, cultures, and languages. These networks collectively support more than 13,000 families with children with I/DD.

Regional Family Networks have a collective purpose to help families like mine plan for positive futures for their children by:

- Providing support, information, and referrals to early intervention and other services to help children and families as early as possible.
- Helping families navigate challenging systems such as the DD, social security, and healthcare systems.
- Wrapping families into a supportive and family-centered community of support through events, gatherings, and conferences.
- Hosting and participating in community trainings and awareness events, including emergency preparedness events specifically for the disabled community where each participant leaves with a emergency go and stay kit that is custom to their individual needs.
- Providing leadership training and supporting families to engage in public advocacy.

I respectfully request your support of SB 1016 to ensure that Regional Family Networks are recognized in statute as part of the intellectual/developmental disability services provided in Oregon.

My best,

Kristen Tobias