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January 23, 2025

Dear Members of the Senate Committee,

I'm writing to share my personal support for **SB718**, the bill to create a Parkinson's disease registry in Oregon. My name is Lorraine M. Bonitati-Havas, and I'm the founder of the Oregon Parkinson's Warriors Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with Parkinson's live fuller, more independent lives. At our Warriors Gym in Eugene, I work directly with individuals affected by Parkinson's, offering exercise programs and support that make a real difference in their daily lives.

In my community, the need for a Parkinson's registry is deeply felt. The prevalence of Parkinson's disease is growing rapidly, and we see more and more people coming to us for help. Yet, we lack the data to fully understand the scope of the disease here in Oregon—how many people are affected, where they live, and what resources are most needed. Without this information, we risk falling behind other states that already have registries in place. Fourteen states, including Washington and California, have made this a priority, and it's time for Oregon to do the same.

A registry would be transformative for our efforts in Lane County and beyond. It would allow us to better advocate for the resources our community needs, whether that's more specialized care providers, accessible exercise programs, or education for caregivers. With better data, we could also help identify environmental or occupational factors contributing to Parkinson's, which could lead to prevention efforts that benefit future generations.

For me, this is about making sure no one with Parkinson's is left behind. I've seen how the right support can change lives—helping someone regain their confidence, their mobility, and their hope. A registry would give us the tools to do more of that, not just for the people I work with every day, but for everyone in Oregon living with Parkinson's.

This is a critical step forward, and I urge you to support SB718. Let's make sure Oregon is leading the way in Parkinson's care, not falling behind. Thank you for considering this important issue and for your commitment to improving the lives of those affected by this disease.

Warm regards,

Lorraine M. Bonitati-Havas
Founder and Program Director
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