

Submitter: Brandon Adams  
On Behalf Of: Byron Adams  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2163

Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, and members of the committee,

My name is Brandon Adams, and I am grateful for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2163. This bill would allow an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability to receive assistance, if they need and desire it, when fishing or harvesting shellfish.

As the parent of a child with autism, I know first-hand how big of a life event it can be for families like mine to visit the Oregon coast, go clamming, or have an experience fishing. It is a wonderful opportunity for children to participate in an activity with their family in a one-of-a-kind landscape.

Our children face challenges in many areas of their lives, and unfair restrictions on outdoor recreation should not be among those challenges. Unfortunately, current law does not allow individuals with special needs to receive any assistance, even from family, while clamming or fishing. If a parent or friend does provide assistance, they can face penalties and fines. Based on my personal experience, current law has stopped families from getting outdoors to go clamming and fishing.

I am grateful that you are considering updating this law, as it can increase access for families and children to experience Oregon's coast and waterways. This will bring joy, strengthen family bonding, and provide opportunities for our children's growth outside the home. All families should be able to experience Oregon's natural resources, without fear of being watched, caught, or fined, simply for receiving the assistance that they need. I will be proud as an Oregonian if our state is able to update this law to provide greater access for all.

Individuals with special needs deserve a larger voice in our communities and to be heard to gain more rights. With this bill, we have an opportunity to make a difference. I hope that Oregon will continue to review and update laws to empower children with special needs, and that other states will follow Oregon's lead. Thank you for allowing me this time to testify, and I hope you will consider supporting House Bill 2163.