Submitter: Priscilla Weaver

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB718

I write as a Person with Parkinson’s to urge passage of SB 718. I am a resident of Jackson County, Oregon.

The need for data on the incidence of PD in Oregon is urgent, for both research and the provision of health care services tailored to the multi-faceted needs of People with Parkinson’s.

What could be more urgent than to support research into an incurable brain disease for which there is no drug – none – that will even slow it down? The “newest” -- and so far the only -- small family of drugs (levadopa) that will lessen the daily effects of a few of the symptoms is over 60 years old. The ability to provide researchers with data about the thousands of us Oregonians with PD is an important and straightforward research tool that should be made available now.

There are not sufficient medical resources in Oregon to treat the PD population. Again, having the data on us will help prioritize allocation of funds to support more movement neurologists, specialist nurse practitioners, and PD-trained physical therapists.

The paucity of PD resources in southern Oregon is particularly appalling. We have almost no general neurologists, and none who are movement specialists. I am not aware of any nurse practitioners with specialized PD training, or physical therapists trained in managing gait and balance issues in PD. We desperately need medical providers with the specialized training needed to help us stay active and mobile and out of costly care facilities and home care situations for as long as possible.

I urge you to take one small but vital step to making this happen. By passing SB 718 you will ensure that the evidence of our growing numbers, our geographic isolation, and related demographics, are available to those advocating for more medical resources and to researches looking for the elusive cure.

Thank you for your consideration.

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