

Tab 1

# Template #1: General

Date: 01/29/25

On behalf of: So Every Body can Move

Position: Support/Favorable

Dear Senate Health Care Committee members,

Two years ago my friend was seriously injured and required a prosthetic hand. I have witnessed the emotions and logistics surrounding establishing and maintaining prosthetic care and believe this should be easily accessible for all. For this reason I wish to express my support for Senate Bill 699, which would mandate insurance coverage for orthotic and prosthetic care necessary for physical activity for folks living with limb loss or limb differences. Senate Bill 699 is currently pending in the Oregon Senate Health Care Committee and we urge you to move in favor of this bill.

Imagine being unable to participate in physical activities, explore Oregon's great outdoors, participate in gym class / play on a team sport, or engage in everyday life the way you used to, simply because your insurance refuses to cover the prosthetic or orthotic devices necessary for those actions. This is the harsh reality for nearly 50,000 Oregonians with limb loss or limb difference. A single prosthetic or orthotic device doesn't restore full mobility or function; yet, insurance often deems additional devices as "not medically necessary," leaving individuals without the tools they need to live active, healthy lives. Families and children are forced to pay high out-of-pocket costs - ranging from \$5,000-\$20,000 - rely on charity, or go without access. For those unable to access this medically necessary prosthetic and orthotic care, they can be put at risk of harm or injury when using improper devices, or alternatively, may develop sedentary lifestyles which can lead to long term health complications, isolation, and the development of more costly medical care.

For this reason I believe that current practices discriminate against Oregonians with disabilities and limits their capacity to live full and healthy lives. Meanwhile, covering devices for physical activity has a minimal impact on insurance premiums (a fiscal study estimated it would cost \$0.17 PMPM) while providing long term social and fiscal benefits by improving health access and equity for Oregonians with disabilities.

When my friend needed physical care after losing a limb resources became available, but the emotional support that was needed to process this change was not as easy to find. It is heartbreaking to watch a loved one go through a traumatic event and not be able to provide for them, but with time and dedication my friend received the help they needed in Washington County. It is our government's duty to ensure that everyone in the limb loss/difference has a solid support system to advocate for their needs during their care.

SB 699 is not just about prosthetics & orthotics —it's about ensuring people with disabilities can thrive, not just survive. It's about promoting physical and mental health, reducing long-term healthcare costs, and breaking down barriers to a full and active life. I urge you to vote in favor of this bill so that everyone, regardless of their physical challenges, can access the medical care they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives. Together, we can ensure that every body has the opportunity to move freely.

Sincerely,

Elaine McConnell  
Senator Janeen Sollman