

Submitter: Erica Korpi
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB699

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, and esteemed members of the committee. My name is Erica Korpi, I am from Banks, Oregon and I am here to advocate for SB-699.

As a right below the knee amputee, I face unique challenges that impact every aspect of a person's life. From being a Mom and playing with my children to driving to simply standing here today, I have to constantly think about literally my next step. Sb-699 is even more personal though.

Throughout my life, I have been an athlete.

At 22, I became an amputee following a devastating motorcycle accident that led to the loss of my leg. I was lucky to survive. My first question to the prosthetist in the hospital was, "Will I ever run again?" He explained that securing insurance coverage for a prosthetic foot specifically designed for running would be difficult. At 22, my only option was a grant if I wanted to have any chance at accomplishing my goals or maintaining my mental health, despite having health insurance through my parents.

After undergoing four surgeries and spending over nine months in recovery, I was able to walk again. Just two weeks later, I ran on my first running prosthetic, provided by a grant.

In the past 10 years, this running foot has enabled me to achieve remarkable feats, such as running with my children on the trail near our home and participating in the Hood to Coast race alongside other disabled athletes. Running doesn't just bring me a sense of pride though and like so many others, movement is essential to my health and wellness. Running is freedom. Running is bilateral movement that keeps the ptsd at bay and moving through. Running is a necessity.

As a member of a disabled running team, I don't just see but truly understand that our ability to run is not the issue; rather, it is the unequal access to the essential equipment that prevents us from participating in activities accessible to able-bodied individuals. Activities like being a Mom and running in the park with my children or going for a run with my husband or simply running across the street

Today, I stand before you and urge you to pass this bill, ensuring equitable access to movement-specific prosthetics and orthotics.