

Hello, my name is Casey Moore and I am here to ask you all to support Senate Bill 549. In 2000 I dove into shallow water and broke my neck at the C5 C6 level leaving me a quadriplegic. Since that day, I have relied on complex rehabilitation technology for every aspect of my daily life. My power wheelchair has become an extension of myself and has allowed me to continue to live life to the fullest. Since sustaining my spinal cord injury, I have gone on to get married, start a family, and flourish in a career that I love. But all these things get put on hold every time my wheelchair breaks down. When this happens, I have two choices. I can lay in bed and wait through the process to get the repairs I desperately need done, or I can choose to try and borrow a wheelchair from somebody in the community and make-do the best I can until the repairs are finished. I have done this multiple times, which at first sounds great. The problem is though complex rehabilitation technology like power wheelchairs are custom fitted to the individual, and often times these customizations are preventing secondary health conditions like pressure sores. I have personally waited months for repairs. And every time this happens my life gets put on hold. And the most unfortunate part is this happens a few times every year. Sometimes it's just routine maintenance that needs to be done to keep my power chair running smooth, but waiting weeks and months to get in for this maintenance often causes more issues that then turn into large repairs. Those are the lucky times when it's just maintenance that is needed and I can still get by and operate my chair while waiting. The worst times are when something major breaks, and my wheelchair becomes unusable. Those weeks and months waiting with a broken wheelchair are deflating and take away my independence and freedom to move. This is my personal experience, and as a Community Health Worker for Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection I've seen these situations happen hundreds of times to others. Your support of Senate Bill 549 would help to shorten these wait times by removing the barrier of prior authorization before a technician can make repairs. Doing so would enrich not only my life, but many others that rely on complex rehabilitation technology throughout Oregon.

Supporting Oregon Senate Bill 549 is essential for several reasons:

1. ****Timely Access to Repairs****: Allowing users of complex rehabilitation technology (CRT), such as power wheelchairs and other mobility devices, to receive timely repairs without the need for prior authorization ensures that they are not left without necessary mobility for extended periods. This can greatly impact their quality of life and independence.

2. **Reducing Bureaucratic Barriers**: The current requirement for prior authorization can create bureaucratic hurdles that delay essential repairs. By eliminating this step, Senate Bill 549 streamlines the process, making it more efficient and responsive to the needs of users.

3. **Supporting Independence**: Many individuals who rely on CRT have disabilities that make mobility devices critical to their daily activities. Quick access to maintenance and repairs helps them maintain their independence, engage in community activities, and participate fully in society.

4. **Cost-Effectiveness**: Allowing repairs without prior authorization can potentially lead to cost savings for the Medicaid system by preventing more significant issues that arise from delayed maintenance, which can result in expensive emergency services or hospitalization.

5. **Promoting Fairness**: This bill can help ensure that individuals who depend on mobility devices have equitable access to necessary services, promoting health equity and addressing disparities faced by those with disabilities.

6. **Advocacy and Awareness**: Supporting this bill raises awareness about the importance of access to mobility devices and the challenges faced by those who use them. It can encourage further legislative action to improve services for individuals with disabilities.