

Submitter: Sara Hollandsworth
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB699

Good afternoon Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden and members of the committee. Thank you for your time. My name is Sara Hollandsworth and I am the co-lead for So Every BODY Can Move-Oregon. I am testifying today in support of SB 699. I am a fascia stretch specialist, personal trainer, and adaptive athlete living in Dallas, Oregon. I am an Oregon native and lifelong runner. I was the varsity track and cross country captain for South Albany High School and went on to run track and cross country for Western Oregon University. I have been an athlete all of my life and a fitness and wellness professional for over 20 years. Health and fitness have been my life's work both with and without feet. In 2002, while finishing my degree in Kinesiology and Sports Psychology, I unexpectedly ended up in the ER in full organ failure, on life support and in a medically induced coma unexpected to live from a life threatening infection. The medications that they used to sustain life caused me to lose blood flow to my legs, eventually requiring both legs to be amputated below the knee. The doctors said that the only reason I lived was due to how strong and healthy I was coming into a health crisis that most would not have survived.

As a lifelong athlete and fitness professional, it was devastating when I encountered how difficult it is to get coverage for physical activity prosthetics. When I lost my legs, I feared I would not be able to afford the prosthetic care I needed to get back to work as a personal trainer and a full, healthy and active life. My running blades cost \$15,000 EACH and this is not something I would have access to without insurance coverage or grants. Getting access to physical activity prosthetics has arguably been harder than running without feet. As an Oregon native and runner, I grew up running the Hood to Coast relay with my high school team before losing my legs and in 2023, I returned to run it with an all adaptive team including some of these individuals here today with my running blades thanks to a grant. It took a few years before I would apply because I didn't want to rely on charity. I am someone who takes pride in hard work, grit and self reliance and I didn't want to have to resort to charity, but that has been our only option. Eventually my dedication to physical activity superseded my pride, and I'm grateful that it did, but

I believe citizens with limb loss and limb difference in Oregon deserve better, especially in a state that is a leader in health and fitness, healthcare reform and disability rights. We already have an uphill climb, we are simply asking for the tools to do so. We are fighting for access to the very thing most people take for granted every day. While many able bodied individuals won't lace up their shoes and head out the front door for a walk, run or bike ride, we are fighting for access to do so.

Whether an everyday athlete or a Paralympian, we all require the same medical care for physical activity. There aren't special or more expensive devices for professional or competitive athletes; it's the same standard of care to restore mobility. These are simply the appropriate devices for the individual and the physical activity they are engaging in. You can't turn on the tv without seeing commercials of adaptive athletes engaging in physical activity. The media glorifies adaptive athletes, particularly Paralympians. They depict the glory, but leave out the story of the fact that the access to these devices are often the hardest part for us. It's time for the policy to catch up with the publicity. SB 699 will ensure that individuals with limb loss and limb difference have the ability to live a full, healthy and active life. Movement is medicine and fitness is preventative medicine. It's time we equip and empower citizens like myself-who just want access to what we need to be able to move freely again! As free as possible all things considered. Thank you for your time and support.