



Submitter: **Nicole Ver Kuilen**
On Behalf Of: **So Every BODY Can Move**
Committee: **Senate Committee On Health Care**
Measure, Appointment or Topic: **SB 699**
Date: **January 31st, 2025**
On behalf of: **So Every BODY Can Move**
Position: **Support/Favorable**

Good afternoon Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and members of the committee:

My name is Nicole Ver Kuilen. I am the Director of Impact Campaigns for the Amputee Coalition and the Campaign Lead for So Every BODY Can Move, our national healthcare and disability rights initiative which SB 699 is part of.

When I was 10, I was diagnosed with bone cancer and had my leg amputated to save my life. Shortly after, my family and I were shocked to realize that my prosthesis wasn't waterproof and wasn't meant for physical activity. But this was all insurance would pay for. Having an additional device to run or swim was considered a "convenience" and "not medically necessary." But the truth of it is, one device is not enough to replace what the human body can do.

My family didn't have the funds to pay for another leg out of pocket and so I went without. Unfortunately, that put me in physical therapy twice a week from intense back pain and I ended up breaking my prosthetic foot every 6 months, when it was supposed to last 3 years. When I turned 25, I finally had enough and asked, "What truly makes me disabled?" So, I quit my job and did a 1,500 mile triathlon from Seattle to San Diego - all on my walking prosthesis - to raise awareness. I called that journey Forrest Stump. At the end, I got noticed by a charity and received my first ever running prosthesis - nearly 16 years after my amputation. Since then I've been able to run in the Boston Marathon and participate in sports I only dreamed of as a kid. But I know no one should have to go to that length to get the medical care they need.

I've now been working on this issue for the past 8 years and I'm excited to share that So Every BODY Can Move has become a national movement. In the past



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two years, we have recruited 38 state coalitions, introduced bills in 19 states and enacted legislation in 8 including Minnesota, Colorado, Illinois, Arkansas, Maine, New Mexico, New Hampshire, and Maryland. This year alone we are expecting 15-20 bills to be introduced across the country like SB 699.

The reason for this widespread success is simple: this legislation just makes sense. It's low-cost with a huge social impact for people with disabilities who simply want to be independent, healthy, and have access to basic human dignity. It's already the standard of care within the VA and for Worker's Comp. It has been a bipartisan issue across the country, receiving support from insurers who recognize it as the right thing to do.

A national fiscal study shows that in Oregon, this legislation would cost less than \$0.17 per member per month (PMPM), with significant long-term savings. People with access to appropriate prosthetic and orthotic care are more likely to be employed, healthy, and independent, which benefits the entire community.

This campaign has the support of national organizations like the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and the American Physical Therapy Association, as well as local Oregon institutions, including OHSU, physicians, prosthetists, and physical therapists.

Simply put, movement is medicine, and physical activity should be a right, not a privilege. I urge you to vote in favor of SB 699 to restore this right for all Oregonians.

Thank you for your time and consideration.