

Submitter: Lisa Tschudi  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB538

I urge yo to vigorously support SB 538 (also known as Tensy's Law) this session. This bill is a win win for particularly vulnerable kids and the tax paying public. The bill would increase access to Oregon's Children's Extraordinary Needs (CEN) waiver; allow parents of minors to be personal support workers; and ensure this compensation comes from already-obligated funding.

I am a parent of a wonderful young lady with IDD. Had the ACA expansion and Tensy's Law been in place when she was young, I could have provided her more stable housing and more opportunities of many sorts. As it was, we moved frequently, creating a lot of upheaval in my daughter's life to follow one parent's career due to the other parent being unpaid to provide extensive disability related support. That support included: preparing a neurologist prescribed ketogenic diet where all meals were measured out for each ingredient to match a plan to the nearest gram, scheduling, providing transportation for and meaningfully participating in at least once weekly medical appointments, and sometimes daily, following at home plans developed by medical professionals regarding mobility and speech, assisting with bathing, toileting and all other activities of daily living for a teen, and so much more. There were no nonparental DSPs to hire for many of the DSP hours she was offered by the state, though we hired whenever we could. As parents we remained the on-call backstop when there were no shows, making it impossible for both of us parents to predictably attend another job. And my daughter was fortunate to have both parents with her and actively engaged.

Without adequate in-home support, families face heartbreaking decisions of placing their child in an institution or struggling without care. Many parents are left with no choice but to quit their jobs, take unpaid leave, or forgo sleep to meet their child's needs. Tensy's Law provides an immediate, no-cost workforce solution by allowing parents—who are already trained, qualified, and committed—to provide this essential care. I firmly believe that one of the things that keeps vulnerable kids more safe is the widest possible choice, practically and sustainably available. Paying parent caregivers is one very important component of these choices.

Sincerely,