

Submitter: Advocates For Disability Supports
On Behalf Of: Joanne Yokoyama Martin
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB538

To Oregon Lawmakers: Please vote yes on Senate Bill 538, also known as Tensy's Law. Although parents of disabled adults can be paid caregivers, this option isn't available for children, leaving many young families with impossible choices. SB 538 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. Caring for a child with complex medical needs is a full-time job, yet many families are forced to live in poverty because the state refuses to compensate them for this labor. A staggering 75% of these families rely on public assistance, even though two-thirds say they could leave at least one assistance program if they were enrolled into CEN. 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. On a personal note, I have a dear friend with a medically fragile child who made the decision to leave OR and move to another state (Colorado) that supports parents of disabled children to be their personal support worker. The level of disability services available in OR to families and individuals with complex mental and medical needs fall short of what many other states are able to provide. Please support this law.
From: Joanne Yokoyama-Martin Joanne Yokoyama-Martin