

Hello Chair Patterson and Vice Chair Hayden, along with all other members of the committee. I apologize for my issues with my remote testimony. My name is Megan Maddux. I also want to apologize for my scatter-brained testimony once I was able to get my phone working, public speaking has always freaked me out.

I am a single mother of an 8-year-old level 3 ASD child. He also has other medical issues as well like asthma, Gerd, along with separation anxiety, and panic attacks, along with his immune system being so poor. My son's name is Damain, He has been diagnosed as non-verbal, but has learned ASL and some verbal English ( although it doesn't come out sounding right, we are now thinking he has speech apraxia). My son has a very hard time communicating with others besides myself, especially adult men, I can't explain why adult men scare him but he suffers worse anxiety when around men. Damian has public school trauma due to things that have happened here in the Pendleton School District. The principal of the PELC here in Pendleton would force hugs on him and kissed him after he would try and push away, she would tell him she loved him. Which is highly inappropriate. My son knows that No means No. I can't even trust that my son will be safe when he's supposed to be with adults that are supposed to be trained to handle our children, Pendleton doesn't even have an autism program, during our attempt to get him to be in public school he was ripped out of my arms while in full crisis mode and put out into the playground with one of the teacher aides, while the principal refused to let to get to my child. That made him terrified of public schools even more than he already was. So, we homeschool. I am a full-time care giver for my child without getting paid for it. If I was able to be my son's paid caregiver, we would be able to afford rent without help from Capeco, DHS, Tanf, etc. We can't even afford to keep food in the house, we have to go to food banks because the SNAP benefits we receive isn't even close to enough, my son has ARFID and only eats a hand full of things, that being said, I spend all of our food stamps on his food and I survive off food banks, I can't get my medical needs taken care of with such a low income, so I put it on the back burner so my son can have his needs taken care of. But what if I'm no longer around? What will happen to my child?

We do have a meeting with CDDP services on February 13th at 10am, to see if we qualify for their services, I've been told that we should more than qualify. The issue is that my son's separation anxiety is so bad that I can't leave him with my roommate (who he's known since he was a year old) for more than an hour or two at a time, let alone a stranger that he hasn't known all his life. We go to ABA 4-5 days a week for 2 hours a day, but even then, after knowing his ABA worker for close to a year, I can't usually leave. If I'm able to it usually is 20 minutes or less. My son is huge for his age he is 124lbs, he is almost 5ft tall, and is a tippy toe walker, which means he is all muscles and when he has a melt-down he doesn't know how big he is or how much his swings impact others. I have had others ( whether at school/his other family members/my roommate/etc.) not know how to deal or handle him while he is like this. My son freaks out whenever he can't find me, or doesn't know where I am, I can't even go to the bathroom without him freaking out and coming into the bathroom to sit on my lap or play in

the sink while I'm in there. My son has incontinence issues and is still in pull-ups. When he was in public school they didn't change him, they also didn't tell me when he got hurt, I would only find out after picking him up for the day. When i called the school, they couldn't tell me what happened. That is unacceptable! My son deserves the same consideration and care as other children, but we weren't given that Damian doesn't know when or if he has to go to the bathroom until it's usually too late. He wets his bed and also sweats through the night. Dr.s here in Pendleton say that it's normal or that he's fine. But as a mom that is with him 24/7, I know when there is something wrong. I have been struggling to find proper care for my child due to living in a rural area like Pendleton. We have been able to get services through OHSU in the past, and we are on lists for other resources. I beg you to vote yes on SB538! The state is already paying caregivers, why can't it be me I know my child best don't I?

Thank you for your time and consideration. Again, I apologize for my technical issues during the meeting, thank you for taking the time to listen and read my testimony!

My son Damian and I appreciate all of you who spoke about your struggles and lives that are impacted by this, and we thank you for your insight and help in supporting this law.

Megan Maddux.