

Submitter: Carina Comer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5025

February 7, 2025

Dear Committee Members,

As a small business owner, independent legally blind woman who's been through a lot in my 33 years, my life depends on having enough customers coming in the door, the support of family, and the safety net of government programs like SSI, Medicare and Medicaid when the worst happens.

This is only the beginning of the challenges I faced in my life, but I'm lucky enough to keep going on doing what I enjoy doing and am meant to do while helping my community. In doing so, I've met and become friend and colleague to numerous people who are not so lucky. Their hopes and dreams are large, but their medical relapses and the distrust of society lets them down. They don't need the government letting them down to, or to be forced deeper into poverty due to medical bills. Did you know that over 10% of the human population has a condition formally described as a disability? It can be by birth or by accident – tomorrow that could be you or someone you know, and you would hold on to whatever parts of life you could, with the hopes that support would be there when you need it. Like living in poverty, having a disability or a long-term illness makes it hard to come back into normal society, to be believed in that you have the work ethic and the skills necessary to do a job win fact the adversity one in either of these situations faces makes them a more dedicated worker with unique kind of innovation.

I ask you to think of this future self or someone currently in your life that lives with any kind of hardship, a soul who deserves to live and be heard, and please fight for legislation that keeps these programs intact and up to date with modern needs.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Carina Comer
Beaverton Oregon