

February 16, 2025

Oregon State Legislature  
Senate Committee On Human Services  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Members of the Senate Committee On Human Services,

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 20, which seeks to remove the income and resource eligibility limits for the Employed Persons with Disabilities (EPD) program under the Oregon Health Plan (OHP). This policy is a critical step in promoting economic equity and opportunity for Oregonians with disabilities.

Currently, EPD participants face an impossible choice: advance in their careers or retain access to essential long-term supports and services (LTSS) through Medicaid. The existing income and asset limits—250% of the Federal Poverty Level and \$5,000, respectively—create a harsh disincentive to work, save, or pursue promotions. These arbitrary limits trap individuals and families in cycles of poverty, making it harder for them to achieve financial security and independence.

By eliminating these thresholds, SB 20 will empower people with disabilities to fully participate in the workforce without losing access to the care they rely on. It will allow them to:

- Build careers and accept promotions without fear of losing life-sustaining benefits
- Contribute their skills and talents to Oregon's workforce
- Save for emergencies, retirement, and homeownership
- Enjoy better health outcomes due to increased financial stability

This policy is not only beneficial to individuals with disabilities; it is also fiscally responsible. EPD participants pay into the Medicaid system through a buy-in program and contribute taxes, reducing the overall cost to the state. Additionally, employer-sponsored health coverage often offsets state-funded healthcare expenses. Research shows that employed people with disabilities experience better health outcomes and lower healthcare costs, benefiting Oregon's budget and public health system.

SB 20 is a powerful, equitable solution that removes systemic barriers to employment, allowing people with disabilities to live independently and with dignity.

I urge you to support this legislation and help create a future where all Oregonians can thrive without choosing between their livelihoods and their health.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Renee Goyeneche