

Submitter Erin Morlan  
On Behalf Of: Cash Morlan (son, age 3)  
Committee: Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Measure: HB 5515

Dear Members,

My name is Erin Morlan. I strongly support HB 5515, which would restore and improve services for children in Early Intervention programs.

My son, Cash, is a vibrant and sociable three-year-old. Due to his medical complexities, he relies on equipment and assisted communication devices to learn and develop his skills. When Cash was enrolled in Early Intervention Services in February 2022, our fears about how we could support him lessened. The teachers and therapists at Northwest Regional in Beaverton became a tremendous support system. Without these critical services, he would not have had a chair to sit in or devices to help improve his vision and communication.

When your child is given a severe life-altering diagnosis, your world feels like it is crumbling. The support we receive from Early Intervention reminds me that the world is opening up a bit more for Cash. My heart sank when we heard that Early Intervention services would be cut back, making it impossible for Cash to enroll in an inclusive preschool. I could not believe this was happening in the state of Oregon. Inclusivity is the foundation of learning for ALL children.

Early Intervention Services have made a huge difference in Cash's development. Cash spent the majority of the first 2.5 years of his life in the hospital including OHSU. He has faced an uphill battle that eventually led to his needing a liver transplant at the age of two. Early Intervention was a constant in his life during this unimaginable time while we relocated to Seattle. One of our teachers sent us a care package with all of Cash's favorite things. It is little things like this that make a huge difference. Not many people in this world care about others like the teachers at Early Intervention care for their students. I am concerned we are heading in the wrong direction without your support of HB 5515.

Without restoring the Early Intervention program, I fear Cash will not be able to reach his full potential because he relies so heavily on these services. Early access to these services is crucial in childhood development. Please stand in support of this legislation.

Sincerely,  
Erin Morlan

