

Submitter: Jasmine Merritt
On Behalf Of: Alastair Merritt
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Right now I'm going to take a moment to just speak for my youngest kid out. Whenever I advocate, I specifically try to advocate for both of my kids.

It took 3 months for an Oregon classroom to make the space safe enough for Alastair to attend regular classes. Trained people who knew what they were doing placed him in that class. People paid for by Oregon taxpayers.

Understand they never acknowledge that the classroom wasn't safe enough specifically. They would call me when Alastair had gotten in somewhere high that they couldn't get him down from. Or after he fell from something high. Like the ceiling. That's how nuance

If Alastair's caregivers, aren't trained enough, he could die. So instead I do it all myself. Without pay. I can't work. Despite this being my actual field of employment. Because I'm too busy providing these services for free to my own children. That might sound cold.

But I have a degree from Portland State University and student loans going unpaid every year. When I am using my education. I'm providing the support to my child needs to save his life and keep him safe daily.

Like any other parent, if you can't find somebody to do it you end up doing it yourself. We have hundreds of care. Attended hours go wasted every month. Please fund this. We were told this was going to be the thing that kept us from poverty. And instead things just keep getting harder and harder. Please keep your promise to Oregon. Oregon. These are our children. Please.