

Submitter: Patrick Murphy

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5526

I am writing to express my strong support for the full funding of attendant care services for children with disabilities and the urgent need to expand the Children's Essential Needs (CEN) waiver to include all eligible children in Oregon. As the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) prepares its budget for the upcoming biennium, I implore you to prioritize the needs of children with disabilities, particularly those identified by SB91-2023 who require high levels of care.

For many families with children who have disabilities, attendant care services are essential. These services enable children to remain at home with their families, in their own communities avoiding the traumatic experience of being placed in a foster care setting. Unfortunately, the current funding levels are inadequate to support the number of children who qualify for these critical services through the CEN waiver. Many eligible children are currently on a waitlist, unable to access the care they desperately need.

Expanding the CEN waiver to include all eligible children is a crucial step toward improving the quality of life for these children and their families. The existing limitation of 155 spots in the CEN waiver is simply not enough; over 1,300 children are waiting for the support they need. By funding these known eligible children, we can provide vital home and community-based services that will have a profound impact on their development and well-being. It will also grow the work force. We are in a work force shortage all over Oregon.

It is imperative that we recognize our responsibility to ensure every child in Oregon, has the opportunity to thrive in the most supportive and inclusive environment possible. Expanding the CEN waiver and fully funding attendant care services are essential steps toward honoring this commitment. We must keep the promises made to these families and provide them with the resources they need.

I respectfully urge you to advocate for increased funding for attendant care services and the expansion of the CEN waiver with a 40 hour per week cap. Your leadership on this issue is vital and will create a lasting, positive impact on the lives of children with disabilities and their families throughout Oregon.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Your constituents need your support on Tensy's Law. I look forward to your support in ensuring Oregon continues to champion the rights and needs of children with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Patrick Murphy
Winston, Oregon