

**To: Chairs Valderrama & Campos, and Members of the Committee**  
**From: Savannah Wieting, Klamath Falls, OR**  
**Re: Testimony in Support of Regional Family Networks—Specifically CODSN**  
**Date: April 1, 2025**

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## **Regional Family Networks Change Lives—And Save Oregon Money**

I am writing in strong support of Oregon’s Regional Family Networks and to highlight the life-changing impact of the **Central Oregon Disability Support Network (CODSN)**—the Regional Family Network serving Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Lake, Klamath, and Wheeler counties.

CODSN is a trusted, **family-led** organization supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families across Central and Eastern Oregon. From the Warm Springs Reservation to remote Harney County, CODSN ensures families receive not only information—but genuine connection, advocacy, and culturally responsive support.

In the 2023–2024 year alone, CODSN:

- Provided **resources and support to 3,655 families**
- Reached **16,257 attendees** through **228 trainings and events**
- Activated **109 community partners** to improve access and inclusion

In communities where families face deep systemic barriers—fragmented services, inaccessible education, and gaps in youth mental health—CODSN steps in to:

- Offer **culturally and linguistically relevant support**, including multiple Spanish-language groups
- Build inclusive, accessible spaces through **sensory-friendly movie nights, resource fairs**, and emergency preparedness events
- Provide **disability awareness education** to schools, healthcare providers, and local governments
- Deliver **family-driven advocacy** in over **150 statewide and regional committee meetings**

Regional Family Networks like CODSN create lasting change. They improve outcomes, reduce family isolation, and help Oregon save money by preventing crisis and reducing system strain. These networks are smart investments—and critical supports for thousands of Oregon families.

**We urge you to continue and expand funding for Oregon’s Regional Family Networks. Our communities need them now more than ever.**

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## How CODSN Has Impacted Me:

April is Autism Acceptance Month; and I'm an autistic woman, wife, mother and self-advocate that has recently been working with CODSN to provide more (desperately needed) opportunities to other disabled adults across Oregon too.

After receiving my autism diagnosis, I was left without any real resources available as a late-diagnosed adult to help me navigate this newfound understanding for myself. Since seeing the need for advocacy and resources for this underserved population (simultaneously feeling the impact while also existing within this group), finding CODSN and working with them to create accessible opportunities and resources has been a step toward equity and hope, not only for myself, but for all disabled adults across Oregon.

My story is *not* unique however, and though most Oregonians probably won't end up receiving the same diagnosis I did, according to national averages, nearly 1 in 4 people *already* live disabled. Further, the chances of the rest of the population ending up with some kind of disability before reaching end of life is also incredibly high—but you don't need to experience disability yourself, to be impacted by it.

An accessible world is a world accommodating to *everyone*, not just the disabled. Larger bathroom stalls, low-sensory impact environments, elevators, ramps, closed captions...these are just a few of many accommodations that benefit our *entire* population as a whole. Programs like CODSN are paramount to ensuring families and individuals have the support they need to navigate a world not always made accessible to their unique needs; but through education, training, support and resources, organizations like this are blazing a trail for an increasing number of desperate people seeking help and answers.

Through CODSN alone, I've met people that share the same passion for justice and change that I do, and as an autistic individual, having that kind of mutual goal setting and hands-on support is invaluable. To not only be given a seat at the table, but also to be invited to create lasting change in the disability community, is a legacy I know I can be proud of leaving. Without CODSN's funding, that opportunity for impact, however, becomes increasingly limited.

No matter whether you lean toward red or blue, when policies and funds offer to help those who can't always help themselves (due to circumstances out of their control even), humanity is what must unite us. Empathy is what must propel us. To take action on behalf of those who cannot stand up and fight for their own freedoms, we must choose to see those living as we might not—to put ourselves in their shoes, and walk, hobble or wheel a mile in them.

What side of history will *you* be on? When your grandchildren look back on the legacy *you're leaving behind*, will they be proud? Will they inherit a world better off than when you, and your generation found it?

Learn more at: [www.codsn.org](http://www.codsn.org)

**Savannah Wieting, Klamath Falls, OR**