

To: Chairs Valderrama & Campos, and Members of the Committee
From: Leslie Seidel, Bend, OR
Re: Supporting Regional Family Networks—The Vital Role of CODSN
Date: 4/2/2025

A Lifeline for Families Like Mine

As a parent of a child with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), I am writing to share how the Central Oregon Disability Support Network (CODSN) has changed our lives. For the past five years, CODSN has been our anchor, providing guidance, support, and a sense of community that we could not have found elsewhere.

When my family first connected with CODSN, we were overwhelmed—navigating special education, healthcare, and social services felt impossible. But CODSN stepped in with resources, advocacy, and—most importantly—other parents who understood exactly what we were going through. This network has given us the tools to not only support our child but to help shape a more inclusive community.

CODSN serves families like mine across Central and Eastern Oregon, covering Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Lake, Klamath, and Wheeler counties. Whether in the Warm Springs Reservation or the remote areas of Harney County, CODSN ensures that no family faces these challenges alone. In just the past year, they have:

- Provided resources and direct support to 3,655 families
- Engaged 16,257 attendees through 228 training sessions and community events
- Partnered with 109 organizations to improve accessibility and inclusion

Beyond the numbers, CODSN creates real change. They have helped me advocate for my child's education, provided inclusive events where my family feels welcomed, and connected us with other parents who share our journey. They offer:

- Spanish-language support groups and culturally relevant resources
- Sensory-friendly community events like movie nights and resource fairs
- Disability awareness training for schools, healthcare providers, and policymakers
- A voice for families in over 150 statewide and regional committee meetings

For families like mine, CODSN is not just a service—it's a community that empowers us. They help prevent crises, reduce isolation, and make Oregon a better place for individuals with I/DD and their families.

I urge you to continue and expand funding for Oregon's Regional Family Networks. Families like mine depend on them every single day. Thank you for your time and your commitment to supporting Oregon families.

Best regards,

Leslie Seidel