

April 3, 2025

Dear Committee Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and fellow members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services, I am providing this testimony in support of SB20 being fully funded within ODHS's budget;

People living with disabilities are facing hardship in their daily life. They must make careful, delicate choices about where to allocate their limited incomes; should they pay for care and monitor their health, should they save for their own futures, or should they just save it for their monthly bills and rental expenses? Often, they are only able to make one of these choices, and choosing to keep and maintain housing is not an uncommon choice among all people, but the difference is that not all people are forced to make a choice between receiving benefits and working, because those benefits are often provided from their workplace.

When you are living with a disability, you are living with a constant variable that dictates the direction of your life. Thankfully, there are benefits to support these individuals, but only within certain income limits. When we choose to only support disabled individuals to a certain degree, we are imposing more complicated variables on their lives that can make it difficult for them to seize opportunities or make choices that could truly benefit their future without losing a necessary pillar of support in the form of Oregon Health Plan and/or in-home care. The current programs (EPD & APD) put a cap on the success that disabled people can achieve, which is unnecessary and harmful to these individuals. They deserve to have an equitable chance at career and income opportunities like everyone else does. We have educated, dedicated, and motivated individuals who are being told to make a choice between their livelihoods and their health, and this is not right.

Please pass **SB 20** and enable disabled individuals to live healthier lifestyles, save on health-related costs, put money in the bank for emergencies, and contribute to the workforce. They will pay taxes, buy-in with Medicaid, and have options for employer provided insurance. This is better for Oregonians, and it's better for America.

Signed,

Ezra C. Lambright

