

Submitter: Nickole Cheron

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5526

I have received caregiving support from the state since I moved to Oregon in 1999. This support has been instrumental in allowing me to both hold a job and still receive the care I need. The job I have provides not only a place for me to live, it provides insurance that is very good at covering much of my medical needs. Because I am employed and receive the support I do not need additional support from the state that I would if I was unemployed. I have been working in the state of Oregon since 2005 and well I do not make enough money to cover caregiving costs. In fact my take home is less than what the state gives me a month to pay for my caregivers, I have been able to save money to afford a home and a vehicle that specifically means my needs as a person with a disability. My disability is very severe but it does not affect my brain and with advances in technology I am able to contribute back to my community as an employee with the city of Portland despite the fact that I have a severe mobility disability that requires caregivers for all of my personal needs. If I was unable to remain on the EPD program because of my assets I would not be able to work. I would be more dependent on state funds. I would no longer have primary insurance and I might need to live in assisted-living which would not only be a huge financial burden on the state it would be a significant impact on my mental well-being. Your support of this bill is not going to make severely disabled people like me who depend on caregivers to get us out of bed and help us go to the bathroom wealthy individuals... Your support will allow us to provide for ourselves and our families in a way that will keep us less dependent on state dollars. What an interesting consideration is the amount of administrative time and money we are doing on the states behalf. As a member of the ICP program I to all of the administration and pay for the advertising, hiring, training and dismissal of my caregiving staff. I joked that it is my second job and the payment for it is actually just what the state provides to pay for the caregivers. Your support of this bill helps erase decades of oppression that has kept people with disabilities living at the poverty level least they lose access to you imperative life support.