

Submitter:

Jennifer Strange

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB5006

Dear Elected Officials, Senate Committee On Health Care SB538, and Ways and Means Committee on SB5006, There has never been a more critical time to pass the funding that will allow SB538 to be legislated. We are talking here about Tensy's Law, in important proposal that allows trained family caregivers to be paid for the care they provide for their 18-years-old-and-under children with high and exceptional medical needs. Please note loud and clear that trained family caregivers currently get paid for caring for family members OVER the age of 18. As support for individuals with disabilities, and their family caregivers, is in increasing jeopardy through threats to Medicaid and other programs, it is absolutely imperative to put into law the protection of paying family caregivers to provide the loving and necessary attention and care to their young family members with disabilities. As the grandmother of three teenage boys of varying levels of disability, this is a personal matter for our family. That said, I know everybody in this room is just one or 2 degrees of separation away from a loved one, an acquaintance, or a time of life when they themselves will be experiencing disability. There is no substitute for a loving, trained, capable Family member to provide that. My husband and I have witnessed firsthand the improvement in our grandsons' lives when their family members care for them. It is an unfortunate reality that many people cannot afford to either be a caregiver or have a family caregiver. Evidence has proven that trained and competent family caregivers truly provide the highest level of engagement with their loved ones. And we must pay these caregivers for their time in order to make that level of care available. Please do the right thing, for your constituents of all ages and abilities, and disabilities. This measure is absolutely necessary for the health and welfare of many Oregonian families. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this pressing matter.