

Submitter: Jennifer Murphy
On Behalf Of: SB 538
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Dear Legislators,

My name is Jennifer Murphy, and I am a resident of Winston, Oregon. As May draws near, I find myself reflecting on the conclusion of the recent road shows. I realize you all have hard conversations to have with what will move forward. I sincerely pray that SB 538 is on the list. Although I have had the privilege of attending each event virtually, including last night's gathering, I sincerely wish I could have participated in person, proudly donning our yellow shirts with our community. Unfortunately, our child's medical condition and immune vulnerabilities prevent us from attending large crowds due to the associated health risks. Nevertheless, we remain committed to supporting these initiatives through remote participation and verbal testimony.

I am reaching out to earnestly request your support for Tensy's Law. I kindly urge you to prioritize SB 538 for a vote in the Joint Ways and Means committee and to ensure it is allocated the necessary funding. The well-being of these children is paramount, and they all deserve access to essential Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS).

This legislation has the potential to significantly enhance our child's health and quality of life by facilitating access to vital HCBS. Presently, our child is number 548 on the CEN waitlist, and the urgency for this bill's passage cannot be emphasized enough. Families like ours desperately need this support, especially considering the challenges in finding qualified caregivers for our children.

We implore you to lend your attention and support to this crucial issue. Additionally, we strongly encourage you to fund Senator Gelser's committee bill SB 91, which passed in 2023 but currently lacks sufficient funding. This continuation to fix it is "Tensy's Law" it aims to ensure that eligible children under Senate Bill 91 receive funding for up to 40 hours per week of caregiver support, acknowledging the invaluable contributions that parents like us are already providing.

Caring for our child is a profound labor of love that we wholeheartedly embrace. Every moment with our child is a blessing; he truly is a miracle and a gift from God. However, it is not without its challenges. I have had to leave the workforce entirely to provide the level of care our child needs, while my husband strives to support our family. I am confident that I am my child's best caregiver, providing unwavering, loving, and consistent support.

Please help us advance SB 538; our community needs your support more than ever.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Warm regards,
Jennifer Murphy