

Submitter: Sonja Stevenson  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006  
Chair Lieber, Chair Sanchez, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sonja Stevenson, and I'm writing today in strong support of SB 538, Tensy's Law—a bill that speaks directly to Oregon's moral and policy commitment to protect and support its most vulnerable children.

These are children who are medically fragile, technology-dependent, or have intensive developmental disabilities. They require constant care, often complex, often lifesaving. And yet, while our state has rightly committed to keeping children in their homes and out of institutions, we have failed to give families the tools they need to make that possible.

SB 538 is a solution already allowed under federal Medicaid guidelines. It would let Oregon pay parents to provide the care they're already giving—care that would be reimbursed if delivered by anyone else. More than 20 states already do this, but Oregon lags behind.

Right now, families are being asked to do the impossible: leave the workforce, provide 24/7 medical care, and survive on hope alone. This bill provides a path forward. It gives families a chance to stay together, children to grow in loving homes, and parents the ability to deliver without falling into poverty.

If Oregon claims to value equity, inclusion, and family preservation, then it is time to act like it. It is not enough to say we care about vulnerable children—we must fund the care they require and remove barriers that harm the very families we claim to support.

SB 538 is a practical, humane, and fiscally responsible step toward fulfilling Oregon's promises.

Please pass it—and let Oregon finally show up for its most vulnerable children in the way they deserve.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sonja Stevenson