

Submitter: Kate Ledson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Written Testimony in Support of SB 538 – Tensy’s Law
Submitted by Kate Ledson
West Linn, Oregon

Members of the Ways and Means Committee,
Thank you for letting me share my thoughts with you today.
My name is Kate Ledson, and I’m 12 years old. I’m the twin sister of Hannah, who has Cerebral Palsy. That means she can’t walk and has a hard time talking because of a brain injury she had when she was born. I’m writing today because I support SB 538, Tensy’s Law.

My sister, Hannah, requires assistance with everyday tasks such as eating, moving, and bathing. My parents take care of her full-time and have two caregivers who help them. They take care of her medical needs, help her with therapy, and support her so she can stay healthy, safe, and happy in our home and out in the community. Currently in Oregon, there is a program called the Children’s Extraordinary Needs (CEN) waiver that allows some parents to receive compensation for caring for their children with high medical or behavioral needs. However, the program can accommodate only 155 children at a time, despite over 1,600 kids qualifying for it. That means many families, like mine, don’t receive the help they need. There is also a significant shortage of caregivers in Oregon, so even when families qualify for services, they often struggle to find suitable candidates to hire.

Tensy’s Law would fix this. It would let more parents who are already trained and know their kids better than anyone get paid for the care they already provide. It doesn’t create more hours or new services — it just makes it possible for families to use the help they already qualify for in a way that works for them.

Other states, like Colorado, already pay parents, and it has made life better for kids and even saved money. Oregon should do the same and help all families, not just a select few.

I respectfully request that you fully fund SB 538. Families like mine are counting on you to help.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Kate Ledson

West Linn, Oregon