



RE: Support for SB 549A – Timely Prior Authorization for CRT Equipment Repairs

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Nelson, Vice Chair Javadi, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the National Coalition for Assistive & Rehab Technology (NCART), we write in support of Senate Bill 549A, which takes an important first step in improving access to timely repairs for Complex Rehab Technology (CRT) equipment by requiring that prior authorization decisions be completed within 72 hours of the request being submitted.

CRT includes medically necessary, individually configured equipment such as customized manual and power wheelchairs and seating systems, which are vital for individuals living with significant disabilities including spinal cord injuries, ALS, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, multiple sclerosis, and other complex conditions. These devices are essential to daily life, allowing individuals to remain safe, mobile, and independent.

Delays in approving repairs to this equipment can lead to serious health risks and unnecessary hardship. As we've shared in past discussions, Oregon's current prior authorization process often causes wait times of 14 to 21 days—during which time the equipment may be partially functional, unsafe, or unusable. This not only jeopardizes a patient's mobility and quality of life but can also lead to secondary complications such as respiratory issues, digestive problems, and pressure sores, which can result in costly medical interventions.

SB 549A reflects the shared recognition among all stakeholders—Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs), CRT suppliers, and consumer advocates—that timely repair of CRT equipment is essential. In recent months, these groups have come together regularly to discuss solutions to this long-standing issue. While SB 549A does not eliminate prior authorization entirely, it represents a meaningful, collaborative first step by ensuring that critical repairs are not delayed unnecessarily due to prolonged administrative processing.

All stakeholders agree: SB 549A is just the beginning. There is a strong, ongoing commitment among CCOs, providers, and consumers to work together during the 2025 legislative interim to further evaluate and address the remaining concerns. The goal is to develop and introduce more comprehensive legislation that ensures timely, appropriate access to CRT repairs while maintaining accountability and system sustainability.

We thank you for your attention to this issue and encourage your support of SB 549A. It reflects a balanced, consensus-driven step forward that centers the needs of individuals with disabilities while laying the foundation for broader solutions in the near future.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to contact Wayne Grau at WGr@NCART.US or (570) 902-9878.

Sincerely,

Wayne Grau

Executive Director

National Coalition for Assistive & Rehab Technology (NCART)