

Submitter: Dane Ross

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5547

Chair Campos, Chair Valderrama, Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Dane Ross, and I'm a father to a child with extraordinary medical needs. I'm here today to ask you to support Tensy's Law—because this is not just about policy, it's about survival.

Oregon is facing a critical healthcare worker shortage, and no one feels it more directly than families like mine, raising medically complex children. While the state may approve a certain number of care hours each month, the reality is, we can't use them.

Between 2018 and 2023, families used only 60% of their authorized care hours.

Why? Because in a separate study, 57% of families reported they simply couldn't find qualified workers, and 41% said they didn't trust the available workers to safely care for their children. I can relate to both.

My child qualifies for hours. But that help often never comes.

As a father, I am trained, capable, and committed. I live this every day. But under current rules, I'm barred from being my own child's paid caregiver—just because I'm his parent and he's under 18. It's an outdated barrier that's costing families stability and the state money.

SB 91 and the CEN waiver took a vital step forward last year. But even though over 1,500 children qualified, only 155 families were allowed in—a 90% exclusion rate—not because of need, but because of lottery.

That's not policy. That's chance.

Tensy's Law fixes this. It honors the intent of SB 91 by allowing every eligible child to access the care they've already been approved for—delivered by the people they already depend on: their parents.

This is cost-neutral in many states and a cost savings in a report from Oklahoma, backed by data, and urgently needed. Please move Tensy's Law forward.

Thank you.