

Dear Senate Health Care Committee, Chair: Monnes Anderson,

I appreciate the tremendous amount of work that has been done thus far, to ensure the highest quality of services to individuals with autism in our state. Our autism community has grown quickly and considerably over the last 20 years, numbers rising from 1 in 10,000 identified to now 1 in 68. I am proud to be in a state where our government is addressing the needs of this community with SB696.

My name is Barbara Avila. I am an autism specialist working with the most severe forms of autism in our state. I have been in business for 8 years. Using ABA principles, I train parents and providers to decrease behaviors challenging the individuals and other's safety and well being while guiding them to be as independent as possible.

I own my own business in Portland, Oregon and currently serve approximately 50 families. I employ 7 independent contractors. We are a primary referral source for both Children's Intensive Intervention Services and the K Plan, both which receive medicaid reimbursement for behavioral consultation. See Synergy Autism Center business profile in "grandfatheringinAp15" attachment.

I am in full support of the bill and look forward to a final version of the bill which includes the key points agreed upon by ABA providers, who are currently serving these individuals in our state. We provided these agreed upon and critical elements in a joint statement to Senator Bates (see attached "April4meetingfinaldraft").

I am specifically in support of a grandfathering-in proviso to this bill, as there are many of us who are highly qualified to serve these families yet do not have the relatively new licensure called a BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analysis) certification. (Please see attachment "grandfatheringinAp15). The grandfathering-in proviso would allow us to provide documentation to our state's Behavior Analysis Regulatory Board (BARB) and/or ensure additional licensing requirements while continuing to serve families until 2018. Without this provision, our Oregon communities will suffer in these ways:

- Access to the current, experienced, high quality ABA providers will cease for families utilizing their insurance companies for services (with severely challenging behaviors)
- Local businesses providing ABA services will no longer have the income currently made through contracts with state and county services as well as CCOs, and may have to close.
- The demand for services will greatly out number the current number of professionals holding BCBA's.
- Due to the demand, above, the cost for services will be over-inflated, causing ABA services to be unduly expensive for Oregon insurance companies, including the Oregon Health Plan.

I appreciate and respect your time in reading this email and welcome any questions you may have in regards to SB696. I had wished to supply live testimony for this bill today, but

circumstances did not allow this. I do hope that this email will do justice to my strong support of this bill with the grandfathering-in proviso included.

Respectfully,

Barbara Avila