



May 15, 2015

Submitted Via Email - WaysandMeans.HumanServicesSub@state.or.us

Senator Alan Bates
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Representative Nancy Nathanson
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: **SB 696 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chairs Bates and Nathanson:

The Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD) respectfully submits this letter in support of SB 696.

CARD is among the world's largest organizations providing evidence-based autism treatment using the principles and procedures of applied behavior analysis (ABA), and CARD is the nation's third largest non-governmental organization contributing to autism research. CARD has 40 locations in 14 states, including one location in Lake Oswego, Oregon, and three additional proposed locations openings in Salem, Eugene, and Portland later this year.

As one of the world's largest employers of autism treatment professionals and paraprofessionals, CARD supports amended education requirements for Behavior Analysis Interventionists that eliminate college coursework requirements. To be sure, CARD employs hundreds of interventionists who have Bachelor's degrees and quite a few with Master's degrees; however, CARD also employs hundreds of interventionists who only have a high school diploma or the equivalent. Because ABA-based treatment is so data driven, the integrity of ABA-based autism treatment can be ensured through rigorous training and supervision and does not require college-level courses. Regardless of an individual's educational background, CARD requires 40 hours of training, a minimum of 15 hours of practicum/fieldwork with a senior therapist or Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), and a passing score on our therapist exam. These requirements are consistent with or greater than best practices, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's guidelines, and state autism mandates that delineate qualifications for the interventionist.

CARD commends Senator Bates for his efforts to ensure that Oregonians diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have access to top-quality, evidenced-based treatment. As evidence-based treatment becomes more accessible in Oregon, it is critical that Oregon have a framework in place to ensure consumer safety and top-quality autism treatment, and SB 696 provides exactly that. CARD further commends Senator Bates for his efforts to ensure that other licensed professionals have the opportunity to continue to provide ABA-based treatment in Oregon, an inclusive approach that has been successfully undertaken by other states and which has proved integral to meeting consumer demand without diluting the quality of autism treatment. Going forward, the importance of the legislative role and that of ORABA and BARB in attracting new ABA providers to Oregon cannot be understated. Given the prevalence rate of ASD (estimated by the Centers for Disease Control as 1:68) and the growing number of states ensuring access to autism treatment through autism mandates, Oregon's current ABA providers are insufficient in number to meet demand. Proactive legislative efforts, such as those reflected in SB 696, protect consumers and their access to top-quality treatment, and the work of

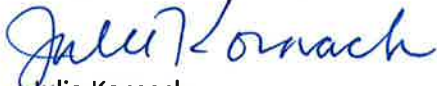
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BARB and professional organizations to ensure continued growth in the field will help Oregon attract ABA providers to the state, just as it has attracted CARD.

SB 696 simultaneously safeguards access to medically necessary autism treatment while creating job growth in Oregon's health care field, and it is a privilege to be part of Oregon's truly extraordinary autism community. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your ongoing commitment to Oregonians affected by autism. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at J.Kornack@centerforautism.com or at (818) 345-2345, extension 1070.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Kornack

Senior Public Policy Analyst

cc: Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Senator Jackie Winters
Rep. Deborah Boone
Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer
Rep. Andy Olson
Rep. Duane Stark