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**Subject:** Testimony concerning DD funding  
**Date:** Monday, March 27, 2017 9:07:17 AM

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My name is Heidi Robinson and I live in Hillsboro with 2 children attending Elementary school here. My daughter Izzy is 7 and was born with Kabuki Syndrome. She experiences Intellectual and Developmental disabilities.

I moved to Oregon with my family 3 years ago. Moving from a different state is difficult, but navigating new special needs services, medical issues, finding new medical specialists and a new school system for Izzy was by far the hardest task. Our biggest resource was our Family-to-Family Network. Time and time again I turned to them for information, for help navigating the Early Intervention program, which was vastly different from Arizona, as well as DD services. I attended seminars and webinars through FACT Oregon, which is the Family to Family Network that serves the area where I live. I called and emailed their support line every time I needed help and made invaluable connections with other parents in the same situation as us.

Coming from another state leaves one inevitably comparing services from state to state. One thing I can say without a doubt is that Oregon's thriving Family to Family Network, which is funded through the Office of Developmental Disability services, is the best my family has encountered by far. FACT Oregon is what gave us the support we needed as a family to prepare Izzy for entering Kindergarten, prepared us for the IEP process and taught us our parent rights, as well as shared what services and resources were available to us and answered our many questions over the last 3 years. FACT Oregon has taught me that we can and should dream big for our daughter's life. It helped us to be actively involved in our local community. Having such a strong family-to-family network as a resource leaves families feeling empowered, lets us know there is a resource we can turn to when we

have questions and has strengthened our family and taught me how to advocate for my daughter.

I want our city and state to be one that appreciates and embraces people with disabilities. Please continue to invest and fight for support services for people experiencing disabilities and maintain current funding levels for DD services so that families like mine, with the help of our Family to Family networks, can dream big dreams for our children experiencing disability and develop natural supports in our local communities in order to live a whole and full life and reduce the need for paid services. Thank you for your time.