

March 28, 2017

RE: SB 5526
ORAL AND WRITTEN TESTIMONY
FUNDING FOR INTELLECTUAL AND
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES/AOCMHP



To whom it may concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Support from Multnomah county Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Services (I/DD) has been the most important and robust support for our son Bennett, and our family. He was eligible in May 2013 but did not start support services until Sept 2015. As new parent's it takes time getting into the right support systems. Even with 2.5 years of missed support the level of care by our dedicated case worker and by the personal care providers who work directly with Bennett have proven nothing but miraculous results.

How this impacts an Individual:

The K State plan has been so impressive with reaching measurable results for my son, and our family. Specifically, The K State Plan provides Bennett the foundational components he needs to be successful today and throughout his adult life. Currently he has two mentors, Big brothers if you will. These phenomenal humans have assisted Bennett in learning critical life skills such as using public transportation, riding a bicycle, proper road safety, eliminating the fight or flight moments reducing his elopement tendencies, increased personal interactions with family, friends & community, nutrition and meal prep, verbal communication, increased his hygiene etiquette, to name only a few.

How this impacts Family and Community:

As a mother of 3 boys ages 8, 4 and 2, the oldest with Autism and Developmental Delay while fulfilling a professional career and battling breast cancer all at the same time, the K State Plan and all programs carry far more support than the dollar written on a page. Please consider our experience as one of thousands of examples of families touched and supported by this funding and its support programs.

If there is anything I could influence today that would be to continue the funding and support to our Intellectual and Developmental Disability individuals and their families. Continue the funding because I am, most importantly my Son Bennett is, living, walking, thriving proof that it works. He is on target to become a great Oregon community contributor because of the work from Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs, DHS, Multnomah County.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bennett, Oregonian since 1976 (born and raised)
Bennett Nicholson, a 9 year old Autistic Boy with Developmental Delay
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