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Senators:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding Senate Bill 275. I am attorney who helps disabled people access federal disability benefits. In that capacity, I regularly help my clients invoke the benefits of ORS 192.576. At my firm alone, that statute has helped hundreds of disabled Oregonians of limited financial means access their medical records. Those records are vital to obtaining federal benefits for disabled Oregonians. In turn, those federal funds reduce the burden on state services.

I'd like to give you a brief overview of how that statute works in practice before Tina Martin, a former client of my firm, tells you about her experience and how she has benefited from the statute.

In my practice, this is the process that I follow when helping a client receive benefits of the statute:

- I Invite the client to complete a statement invoking the statute and requesting that the records be delivered to my office on their behalf
- My office sends that statement along with the appropriate HIPAA compliant releases to the medical records provider
- My office tracks the medical records requested and follows up on aged requests
- My office responds to any invoices received that erroneously state that money is owed on the records
- My office submits the records to the Social Security Administration

The procedure outline above is efficient and effective for both the claimant and the medical records provider. I understand that, even with the more recent proposed amendment listing which kinds of representatives can request free records, SB 275 does not affect procedure outlined above.

As I mentioned, I am here today with a former client, Tina Martin. By way of introduction, Tina was recently successful in obtaining Social Security benefits at a hearing. My office used the procedure outlined above to help her access her records. Tina graduated from High School after receiving special education. She found work with the help of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. And most recently, she worked for 17 years in laundry. Unfortunately, she developed problem breathing as well as other problems with her hands and knees and became unable to work.

Sincerely,

THOMAS, COON, NEWTON & FROST


Scott Sell
Attorney