

From: [Carlie Rhoads](#)
To: [J1SS Exhibits](#)
Cc: [Sen Courtney](#); [Rep Kotek](#); [Sen Wagner](#); [Rep Smith Warner](#); [Rep Drazan](#); [Sen.FredGirod@state.or.us](#); [Sen Burdick](#); [Sen Frederick](#); [Sen Knopp](#); [Sen Prozanski](#); [Sen Thatcher](#); [Rep Bynum](#); [Rep Holvey](#); [Rep Lewis](#); [Rep Salinas](#); [Rep Stark](#)
Subject: LC 52: Access to Care for Oregonians with Disabilities Public Testimony
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 2:29:41 PM

Hello, my name is Dr. Carlie Rhoads and I currently live in Dallas, Oregon. I serve as the director of the Oregon Deafblind Project and I work with educational professionals, families, and children with deafblindness, ages birth to 22. I am writing to ask that Legislative Concept 52 be passed into law this special session so that Oregonians experiencing disability can access healthcare, use support from people they trust while they are hospitalized and have support when making end of life decisions.

I am making this plea on behalf of the children with deafblindness that I work with and their families. When you cannot see and you cannot hear, your world is a much different place and you need a lot of support, trust, and love, especially when navigating a potentially traumatic situation such as a hospital or doctor's office. These children need adults who know them and can adequately support them. A relatively simple procedure such as getting an IV or doing a blood draw can be a very traumatic experience for these children, often even necessitating being held down by strangers to perform the procedure, so it is really critical that these children have adults that they love and trust, who can provide support and help them navigate through these situations.

I recently had a mother call me and explain how difficult it was being alone with her daughter, who has deafblindness, in a doctor's office and trying to get through a procedure that necessitated anesthesia. The mother was forced to be alone due to current pandemic-mandated policies, and as a result, the daughter showed signs of regression and almost six months of learning progress has been undone due to the trauma of the medical procedure. Yes, these procedures are necessary, but we can make them much less traumatic and much more supportive so these children don't lose hard won progress and improvements.

So I am asking you to please support and vote yes on LC 52. There are over one hundred children with deafblindness in the state of Oregon and each one of them needs us to be their voices, to advocate for them, and to support them.

Best wishes,
Carlie Rhoads

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