

Dear Committee,

My name is Tom Keating, of 2430 Washington St. in Eugene. 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.

For over 30 years I was the primary care provider for my brother James who passed away several years ago, in the process spending two periods of over two weeks each in hospital care. I can't imagine how frightened he would have been and how challenging it would have been for the hospital staff to care adequately for him given his limited communication abilities due to autism and his inability to advocate effectively for himself. Although my brother is no longer here, I know many people with disabilities who would benefit greatly from this decision, especially given the recent data from Washington State indicating that the mortality rate from COVID-19 is **three times as high** as for individuals without disabilities, as noted in this 6/19/20 report on [Northwest News Network](#).

Thank you kindly for your time and your careful consideration of this very important legislation.

Most sincerely,

Tom

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