

March 25, 2019

To Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer, Vice Chair Tawna Sanchez and Ron Noble, and Members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing:

RE: Please support House Bill 3206

My name is Erin Ross and I am a DeafBlind Oregonian mother with small children. I am here to seek your support for House Bill 3206 regarding authorization of Support Service Providers (SSP) service for DeafBlind individuals in the State of Oregon.

There are more than 350 DeafBlind Oregonians who do not have full access to activities of daily living. This inhibits our autonomy. Routine activities such as shopping, medical appointments, meetings, job-related events, trainings, and taking children to kid-friendly destinations are difficult for us to perform independently. Most of us depend on our spouses, relatives, or friends to act as caregivers and take us to certain places. Our caregivers are often fatigued from giving us rides, navigating places, and giving detailed descriptions of things that we are looking for. The stress of caregiving strains our relationships and often leaves us abandoned as we struggle to seek our autonomy.

If SSPs are available, they will be able to get paid and perform duties that would place less burden on our caregivers. Everyone involved will be happier and we the DeafBlind will be able to perform to our greatest potential with more autonomy. We will likely to become proud taxpaying citizens who will improve the State's economy through increased employment. We will be able to shop more which will benefit businesses.

Please support the HB 3206 to allow us maximize our autonomy. We promise that your service will yield positive outcomes for us and we will give back to the State of Oregon by boosting its economy and employment rate.

Thank you for your time,

*Erin Ross*

Erin Ross