

**From:** [choosingwell4](#)  
**To:** [J1SS Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** Support for SB 1606: access to care for Oregonians with disabilities  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 24, 2020 2:24:16 PM

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Hello. I am Dena Wilder and I live in Southeast Portland.

I have worked as a caregiver in a variety of capacities all my life. Over the past five years, I have worked for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. When the pandemic initially occurred, my first thoughts were imagining my clients having to navigate healthcare decisions in a hospital without any support. This thought terrified me.

I am asking that you please pass SB 1606 so that people with disabilities will be allowed to have people who understand and can assist communicating vital information between them and their health care providers. They need people who know them best to be at their side during life-saving health interventions.

For some people I work with, it takes 6 months to a year to fully learn all the nuances of communicating with them. As caregivers, we become their assistive technology for communication.

I have clients that are unable to read. I have clients that can read but will not comprehend it, they need someone to help put documents forth in a way they understand. I have clients that have had trauma in their lives and shut down when things trigger them. I have learned how to help them through this. I have clients whose verbal skills are limited and difficult to understand but I have learned how to hear them.

If health care providers are able to suit up in protective gear, we should be able to suit up as well and sit beside our clients during a hospital stay. We need to be there to be that direct support, the person who knows them best (whether it be a paid caregiver or family member), to help communicate the needs and desires to the healthcare professionals.

Please pass this much-needed legislative bill in order to protect people with disabilities from miscommunication and potential extreme trauma as they navigate the healthcare system.

Thank you.  
Dena Wilder  
SE Portland  
97206

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S8.