

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 1606. I am a legal guardian for my adult sister with intellectual disabilities. Even when she is healthy and doing well, her speech can be difficult for others to understand and she also needs frequent support understanding what others are conveying to her. When she is ill or in pain, these needs are amplified. She is nearly 60 years old and has underlying medical conditions, all of which make her much more vulnerable to contracting COVID 19 and struggling to survive it. She or any other vulnerable person who needs assistance with communication/cognition should not ever be left alone in a hospital setting with no one near them who can understand their needs and assist with conveying important information. In addition to supporting my own family member, I have spent 33 years working in Oregon in the field of intellectual/developmental disability services and have served many individuals whose needs are similar to (or greater than) those of my sister. Being able to give/receive information in a health care setting is a human right and allowing someone to accompany individuals with special needs into a hospital setting is an ADA accommodation. For all of these reasons, I strongly support SB 1606 because no Oregonian should be left without support in a hospital setting. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

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My favorite quote: *"The first duty of love is to listen."* ~ Paul Tillich

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