

My name is Cari Davis. I live in Marion County. I work for The Arc Oregon and I am writing this email to say I am in Support of Senate Bill 1606 because no one who experiences a disability should be denied the right to have a support person with them in the hospital. Not allowing someone a support person could mean life or death for that person. For individuals with limited or no verbal skills hospital staff have no way to communicate but staff who work with them know them and know their non-verbal communication they can be the interpreter and voice.

A personal story I have is of a man who had limited sign capabilities and can't show expression of any kind on his face due to his disability affects his facial muscles. The hospital staff was convinced that when he refused to eat (puree food) and drink (pudding thick) liquids that this meant he was ready to die. The hospital forced him to go home on hospice and would not listen or even try what we tried to tell them to try to get him to eat (cut the food cut) and drink (in a sippy cup with a lid). They allowed him to get down to 98 lbs he is 5ft 7in. He looked like skin stretched over bones. The success story is that once he was home and under the correct care with staff who understood him, he started eating and drinking and was taken off hospice 2 weeks later. He is still alive and well to this day. This could have turned out very badly if he were to not have staff or anyone who would advocate for him.

All too often medical professionals treat individuals with disabilities like they have no value just because they can't speak, can't walk or whatever the disability it is. The medical world needs a wake-up call because every human life has value no matter what.

Thank you,

CARI DAVIS, National Certified Guardian | pronouns: she, her
cdavis@thearcoregon.org

Advocate

GAPS | The Arc Oregon

main office: 503.581.2726 | direct: 503.910.9671

GAPS after-hours emergencies: 503.319.8625

Read our latest response to COVID-19 and access helpful resources

My favorite quote: *"Don't worry about failures, worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try." ~ Jack Canfield*

Please consider the environment before printing this email. CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail may contain confidential and legally privileged information. It is intended only for use of the individual(s) named. If you are not the intended recipient(s) or it appears from the context or otherwise that you have received this e-mail in error, you are hereby notified that disclosure, copying, distribution, or taking any action in regards to the contents of this email is strictly prohibited. Please notify the sender immediately, keep the contents confidential, and immediately delete this message and any attachments.