

Hello, my name is Karen McKenney and I live in Beaverton, Oregon. I'm submitting written testimony today in support of SB 1606. Everyone deserves access to healthcare and support from people they trust to help them understand their care and communicate with doctors. Today, too many people experiencing disability are not able to access healthcare, are denied support from people they trust while they are hospitalized or having end of life discussions.

I am asking that SB 1606 pass 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. This is an emergency and is directly related to the COVID-19 crisis. These changes cannot wait until next year because people with disabilities are experiencing these barriers to health care today.

My son, Sam, is 28 years old and is a young man who experiences developmental disability. Sam also has a seizure disorder that puts him at risk if he were to be infected with COVID-19. Sam works and lives in community with supports, and it's difficult to imagine that his health or life would be at risk during this pandemic because of lack of access to healthcare or denied support from myself or others if he were to be hospitalized, especially as Sam can't always communicate his needs. I ask that you support SB 1606 during this Special Session so that all Oregonians with disabilities such as my son can have access to healthcare and support during this COVID-19 crisis.

Sincerely,
Karen McKenney