

Hello,

My name is Barry Snowe and I live in Portland, OR; I support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who work and live in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.

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. I would hate for any of the people I support to be denied the people that they most trust be denied from accessing their client. Sometimes that is the only person in their lives.

Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Thank you,


Barry Snowe


Provider Coordinator

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Hello,

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 ask that SB 1606 be passed into law 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 urgent concern as preventable deaths have already occurred. These deaths were in the intellectually or developmentally disabled community (IDD) and occurred at hospitals – they could have been prevented if support people were able to be with them while at the hospital.

Best wishes,
Olivia Duffy
Administrative Assistant
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Hello,

My name is Zoe Richerson and I live in the Lents neighborhood in Portland, Multnomah County. Professionally I work with an agency that provides support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who work and live in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.


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Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Zoe Richerson
Resource Manager/Designated Referral Contact
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Hello,

My name is Sarah Ehret and I live in Portland, OR. I support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who work and live in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.

Everyone deserves access to healthcare and support from people they trust to help them understand their care and communicate with doctors. Too many people experiencing a disability are not able to access healthcare and are denied support from people they trust while they are hospitalized or having end of life discussions.

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Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Sarah Ehret
Personal Agent
Pronouns: she/her
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Hello,

My name is Tricia Rosenkranz and I live in Milwaukie, OR. I support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who live and work in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties.

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.

Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Thank you for your consideration!

Tricia Rosenkranz
Assistant Director
Pronouns: She/ Her

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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jamal Robert. I live in Portland, Oregon and I am a Personal Agent at Community Pathways, Inc. I have been supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in various capacities (e.g. Direct Support Professional, Supported Living Coordinator, Personal Agent) for the past six years. I cannot stress how imperative it is for individuals within the I/DD community to have access to their support providers, especially within the hospital environment.

Everyone deserves access to healthcare and support from people that they trust to help understand their care and communicate with doctors. Today, too many people experiencing a disability are not able to adequately access healthcare. They are denied support from people they trust while they are hospitalized or having end of life discussions. I would like to ask that SB 1606 pass this Special Session so that Oregonians experiencing a 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.

Expressive and Receptive Communication: Many of my clients cannot accurately share critical information with medical professionals, which includes information about their disabilities, support needs, medications, allergies (food and medical), or history of risks (e.g. their last recorded seizure, their risk of falling). It is difficult for several of my clients to understand the information that is being communicated to them by medical professionals. They heavily rely on their support providers to translate this information in a way that makes sense to them so they can make an educated and informed decision. This interpretation comes best from support providers that actually know the client, as each person communicates and understands information in his or her own unique way.

I work with several clients that are difficult to understand verbally, cannot read/write, or are non-verbal. One of my clients that comes to mind experienced cerebral palsy, was deaf, non-verbal, did not read or write, and did not speak American Sign Language. His support providers and I were able to communicate with him in a variety of personalized signs/gestures that he understood. We understood his gestures, facial expressions, and personal preferences, which allowed us to communicate his needs to his medical professionals. I honestly cannot imagine him going to a hospital without his support providers. He would not receive the care that he needs, he would not be able to answer any medical questions, he would not understand anything that was going on, and his choices ultimately would not be honored. This particular customer did not have any family members that could help him advocate for his needs; his support providers were his closest form of advocacy.

Recently, one of my previous clients was denied her support providers from entering the hospital with her. This client has cerebral palsy, dementia, is hard of hearing, and unique support needs. Due to her dementia, she could not answer any questions with accuracy (e.g. medications, allergies, preferences) and could not even remember why she was in the hospital in the first place. The nurses actually thought that she did not speak English because she would just smile and nod whenever they asked a question. The nurses were not aware that she was hard of hearing, that her hearing aids were not made available to her, or that even with her hearing aids, she can only understand verbal speech that is spoken in a particular tone/manner.

This client absolutely needs her staff with her at every moment. In some ways, it is borderline abuse/neglect to deprive her of her support staff.

Mental and Emotional Support: Several of my clients need mental and emotional supports. Their support providers have ways of helping them manage their anxiety and stress. Having someone that you truly trust that can assist you with navigating the healthcare system is insanely helpful. There are several clients that would refuse to be cooperative without the support of their support providers. This goes back to communication; support providers have a way of communicating information with their client in a calming and reassuring way that strangers cannot provide. I have a level of trust with several of my clients, which was earned because I had worked with them for six years. They know that I understand them as a person. I know their fears and concerns. And I have a way of talking things out with them so they can maintain their composure. For the I/DD population, I cannot overstate how important this is for them.

I honestly could go on and on about this topic! As a way to summarize, support providers are an essential tool for those that experience I/DD. They are a personal translator that can interpret messages in the language that is specific to that individual. This cannot be replicated by other interpreters, as each I/DD individual has a completely unique method of communication. Support providers are needed to accurately communicate important information to doctors (medications, support needs, etc.), as they have an intimate understanding of the individual that they support. Support providers also help to manage the mental needs of the client and can help them to be more receptive to medical supports. As someone who has directly supported individuals and coordinated their supports, I cannot stress how important this is.

Feel free to contact me if you ever want me to go into more detail, or share personal stories. Thank you so much for considering this important issue! I hope that you are all well and have a good one!

Sincerely,

Jamal Robert
Personal Agent
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Hello,

My name is Linda Peck Athens and I live in saint Helens, OR; however, I support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who work and live in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.

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Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Respectfully,

Linda Peck Athens
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Hello,

My name is Patricia Cantlon and I live in Portland, OR. I work with a nonprofit supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who work and live in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.


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Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Trish Cantlon
Executive Assistant
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Hello,

My name is Alicia Johnson and I live in Portland; however, I support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who work and live in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.


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Please consider passing SB 1606 immediately.

Alicia Johnson
Personal Agent
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