

Hello- My name is Jennie Heidrick and I live in Portland, Oregon. As a long-term advocate for and with people who experience disabilities I am writing in support of Senate Bill 1606. No Oregonian with disabilities should be without needed support in the hospital. Many people who experience an intellectual and developmental disability often have a communication disorder as well. This makes it difficult for the person to communicate their needs and wants in a way that others can understand. Often times family members or direct supports play a role as the person's "interpreter" as they understand the person's non-verbal forms of communication and other modes that work best for the person. Although there are many tools out there to support a person's communication, all of our abilities to communicate under stress is impacted, such as in a hospital setting. This makes it even more necessary to have a familiar person there to provide comfort and communication support. This is a human basic right to feel safe and supported- communication is the key to this for most of us. Please let me know if you have additional questions. Thank you

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My favorite quote: *"At the heart of each of us, whatever our imperfections, there exists a silent pulse of perfect rhythm, which is absolutely individual and unique, and yet which connects us to everything else." ~ George Leonard*

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