

Dear Committee,

My name is Tom Keating. I live in Eugene and I'm writing to ask that you vote to pass SB 1606 pass this Special Session so that **Oregonians experiencing disability can access healthcare with support from people they trust while they are hospitalized and have support when making end of life decisions.**

I agree with the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition that 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.

As noted in my previous email, people with disabilities are more seriously affected by the pandemic and are experiencing triple the mortality of the larger population. I know from my experience as a sibling caregiver to my brother with autism that he would have frightened and unable to effectively communicate and advocate for himself. I was also part of the Arc of Oregon's surrogate guardianship program for many years and understand how important it is that people with disabilities have access to the support and help they need to make essential health care decisions.

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration in supporting this vital legislation.

Sincerely,

-Tom

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