

I am for a lot of parts of this bill. However, some parts of the bill I have concerns about. Because of my intellectual disability, I was not able to understand all the legaleze of the bill. I did not understand what situations made it so that a patient couldn't have a support person with them in the emergency room or hospital. I also didn't understand why if a support person was authorizing life-support to be removed, why one or both of the patient's other support persons aren't automatically notified--as well as the patient's family.

When I was in the Samaritan Mental Hospital in Corvallis last fall, many negative things happened to myself and others that I believe would not have happened if we had each had a support person with us. Or at least if we each had a support person there would be a witness that was for us that saw what really happened. One lady did not have a support person on her side when it looked like she was being required to sign a POLST or advanced directive. I told her when I saw her afterward that she shouldn't have to feel coerced or forced into decisions like that and that sometimes under pressure we can end up signing for things we regret later. I told her she should have the right to change her mind in the days after signing it if she wanted to. She was there at the hospital by her choice, she said, not like me who was committed against my will. However, when it appeared to me she wanted to leave by her free choice...I don't believe they were allowing her to do so. She ended up not eating or talking until she got very, very weak and was finally transferred out of the mental hospital. It got really scary and we were hoping she wouldn't die there in the mental hospital, and hoped she recovered wherever she was transferred, but we were not given that information.

For myself, I assume the reason some of the hospital staff were able to treat me as they did, was because the rules were suspended in my case. I kept track of 15 rules that were rights of patients there that were suspended with regards to me. I believe the reasons they were suspended were not at all valid, but because they could get away with doing that--they did it. One of the big things that happened was they gave me medication without my knowledge and consent. Another thing was they were giving me medication without my permission or consent and without allowing me to be a part of the decision at all even though this was one of the expressed rights I supposedly had. When I refused to take all the meds, a group of 6 or more security people and nurses would come at me like some sort of SWAT team and force me physically to comply with them giving me injections. This was very demeaning and scary. I was also stalked by hospital staff for many of my days there, fully with demeaning talking to me and about me to others. I was lied to and lied about and the hospital records are full of errors and lies, and those errors and lies were the basis of the prosecuting attorney's case against me there where it was deemed I was mentally ill in an illegal way, and where I was sentenced to 6 months under Benton County and it was decided I would spend a month and a half of that time in the hospital.

There are so very many things that were wrong in my stay there.

I would be glad to speak to someone about more of my stay in the hospital, if it would help get better things to happen for other people that are disabled and hospitalized. I think it is a wonderful idea to allow patients with disabilities to have a support person with them of their choosing. However, the hospital staff can lie or call something that is not an emergency and emergency and in so doing suspend the rules and make it so some people cannot have their rights, just because of discrimination against some disabled people in the hospital. A support person should be allowed no matter what.