

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2442  
March 8, 2021  
House Committee on Human Services  
John D. Curtis  
14370 Hwy 62  
Eagle Point, OR 97524

Good afternoon Chair Williams, Vice Chairs Leif and Ruiz, and members of the committee. My name is John Curtis. I am a severely disabled senior living in southern Oregon.

People with severe disabilities have an array of work incentives today. These were not present when I got my first job in 1982. Yet even today it is safe to say that the benefits from working are still outweighed by the number of disincentives.

I worked for 26 years, beginning long after my date of injury. I was told by my disabled peers that I was foolish to even consider it. But having had an education paid for by this state I felt a responsibility to contribute something back. My choice was to forgo public benefits and rely upon my earnings to cover my life's needs. Had I not lived with a supportive family, work would have been impossible.

Most employees wrestle with their costs of housing, food, transportation and health insurance. But the severely disabled who work must also bear the burden of being an employer. And some even pay the costs of their caregiving and durable medical equipment. HB 2442 provides a small way for the severely disabled worker to recoup at least some portion of those costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story.

Your support of HB 2442 is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

John D. Curtis