

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 3108

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House Committee on Health Care

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Good afternoon Chair Prusak, Vice Chairs Salinas and Hayden, and members of the committee. My name is John Curtis. I am a 65 year old quadriplegic living in southern Oregon. My injury date is July 20, 1969. For the most part of my disabled life I have been an advocate for seniors and people living with disability.

My opposition to this bill is limited to Subsection 6 of SECTION 6. While I can only laud the other provisions of this bill, I strongly feel that this Committee should take advantage of the opportunity to tailor this one.

People with disabilities often encounter a hidden stigma that presents when trying to find a provider or referral. The additional time and less lucrative sources of reimbursement for a complex case can dampen a provider's motivation to assume a "problem patient". Patients needing language access (such as in-person ASL) and those with limited English proficiency can also find themselves with this hidden label. Of course this practice violates both the ACA and the ADA. But that is the thing about hidden bias, it still happens often with adverse consequences.

Without some tailoring by this Committee, SECTION 6, Subsection 6 could carve out an escape clause of sorts. I am confident that the Oregon Health Authority would adhere to the provisions of law prohibiting discrimination in any rule it proposes. And having participated in rulemaking I can safely say that stakeholders would put this concern on the record. But why wait for those processes to sort out an obvious parameter that can be addressed at this juncture? Surely a little more guidance could better define the protocol which allows a provider to decline a patient.