

Chair Prusak
Co-Chair Hayden
Co-Chair Salinas &
Health Care Committee Members,

Feb. 22, 2021

We are writing in support of HB 2390.

We are grandparents of a lovely, highly creative, intelligent child, now age 12, who in mid-2015 suddenly and without warning began to exhibit distressing behaviors. Thanks to prompt action by her parents, she was soon diagnosed as having PANDAS, which had been triggered by an asymptomatic strep throat infection.

Our daughter and her husband soon found that while insurance would pay for antibiotics and steroids to treat our granddaughter's strep throat, it refused to pay for the Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG) treatments that ultimately proved effective in controlling her resulting PANDAS condition itself. For those treatments, they had to pay out-of-pocket for the huge expense of each treatment (which we understand can run to \$10,000).

Other Oregon parents have had the same experience. Insurance will pay repeatedly for prescription medicines to deal with the triggering infection (whatever it may be), even though continued use of antibiotics and steroids by young children is commonly regarded as unhealthy for them. But insurance refuses to cover the expense of IVIG---which, although expensive, has been shown to be very effective in obtaining remission or cure of PANDAS.

As everyone knows either from direct personal experience or from watching online videos of PANDAS children and their families, the uncontrollable behaviors in the suffering children are horrific and heart-rending to watch. PANDAS can be as destructive of a family's finances and collective mental health as it is ruinous of an otherwise healthy young person's childhood.

While insurance companies commonly offer the excuse that IVIG is not a "proven" or "accepted" treatment for PANDAS, experience over time has shown that the companies are wrong. In particular, the written testimony before you today by medical doctors from such institutions as the Stanford Medical School is to the contrary.

That testimony points to the solution that we urge the Committee to take---to move HB 2390 forward for a full House vote and, hopefully, adoption by the Oregon Senate.

And Oregon is not asked to be a "pioneer" in this regard. As we understand it, several other states have adopted legislation to do the very thing that HB 2390 will do: mandate insurance coverage.

We urge the Committee to do the right thing and move this legislation forward.

William and Carole Meyer, Portland, Oregon