

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT 10/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

September 26, 2023

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Hudson and Wright, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to you to express my support for Medicaid billing in schools to support the needs of students with disabilities. There is a significant shortage in Oregon of school nurses and licensed health staff who work with students with disabilities and special needs. This contributes to high caseloads for providers and puts students at risk. However, school districts can utilize Medicaid billing programs to fund medically necessary services for children in special education and to improve outcomes for those students.

In 2017, the Oregon Legislature passed SB 111, which directed the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to administer a pilot program to help school districts increase the use of Medicaid billing. The [2020 report](#) from this program offers several recommendations for helping schools utilize Medicaid billing. These recommendations include increasing state-level coordination to incentivize school districts to reinvest school Medicaid reimbursement into school health services, providing funding and regional supports to help school districts implement Medicaid billing programs, and supporting agency capacity and coordination at ODE and Oregon Health Authority for improving and expanding school Medicaid billing.

The report also highlighted the important role of technology in facilitating accurate and efficient Medicaid billing. Currently Oregon lacks technology systems for tracking student information, service provision, and health service provider information, as well as a Medicaid billing submission platform. The absence of these technology systems presents serious challenges for creating a streamlined approach to school Medicaid billing, and the report recommends investing in developing statewide technology solutions to address this. Finally, the report recommends investing in telehealth infrastructure as a method of health service delivery.

School Medicaid billing offers an important opportunity to access additional federal funds to support the needs of students with disabilities and special needs. Leveraging these funds for Oregon school districts will help ensure students are safe and able to thrive in school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.