

Submitter: Ron Heagy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure: SB576

Dear Senators,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 576 and to bring attention to the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in accessing essential healthcare services. I am a high-level quadriplegic and a proud father of two daughters. Despite the significant challenges I have faced in my life, I have never let my paralysis from the neck down define me. Instead, I have used my unwavering determination and my creative talents to achieve my goals and make a positive impact on the world.

However, I am writing to you today because I have been facing a tremendous flaw that has and continues to limit my ability to provide for my family and support work in the community. As a result of the current \$5,000 limit on savings accounts for individuals who receive Medicaid, I am unable to use my own hard-earned money to help my daughters pay for college. This limit is not only unfair, but it also puts people with disabilities in a difficult position, where they are forced to choose between their own financial stability and the essential healthcare services they so desperately need to stay employed and insured. There are no other choices for healthcare that will pay for in-home caregivers necessary to meet my basic biological necessities. I must survive to thrive.

I am a strong advocate for individuals with disabilities and I believe that it is essential for our government to support and empower us to lead full and productive lives. That is why I am urging you to support Senate Bill 576, which would allow individuals like me to use their own hard-earned money to pay for essential expenses, such as education and healthcare, without sacrificing their access to Medicaid. This bill will help to keep people with disabilities employed, insured, and independent, and it will help to ensure that we can continue to make a positive impact on the world.

As a public speaker, I have had the privilege of sharing my story with students, businesses, and communities across the country. My message of hope, resilience, and determination has inspired many, and I believe that it can inspire and motivate our elected officials to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

I urge you to support Senate Bill 576 and to take action to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. Together, we can create a more inclusive and empowering future for all.

With gratitude,

Ron (Oregon resident for 50 years, paralyzed from the neck down while surfing at 17 years old)