

My name is SaraBelle Gifford, my oldest child's name is RileyBelle. She is 13 years old. She has autism, a developmental delay, cognitive delay and many other struggles that come with her autism. We live in Eugene, OR. I am submitting this written testimony along with so many other families in hopes it makes a life changing impact for all of us in our community.

I am in support of SB 646 and against SB 91.

SB 91 is not a program that has our children in mind. We need something that includes everyone. No matter how many hours or special needs of the child. We need something that takes into consideration unique situations that you may not have thought of, cause you haven't lived it. My daughter and I were unable to participate in the temporary paid parent caregiver program that was available during covid because of just a few hours that she does not have. I just don't understand that. But, my daughter can get a DSP from a company? But not her parent just because of a few hours. Many places with DSP or PSW's are lacking employees. Or It hard to match because of your child's specific needs. I have had my close family apply to become my daughters DSP because of many of these issues. And no one knows my daughter better than myself and her family. I am lucky I have some close family or I am afraid I wouldn't be able to find a worker best suited for my daughters needs.

But when it comes down to it, I am Rileybelles caregiver. I have been caring for her for 13 years. No one knows her better than me. No one knows her medical needs more than I do. No one will advocate for her like I will. No one will protect her like I will. No one will take her ISP (individual support plan) more seriously than I do. No one will go the extra mile like I have all these years.

I am a single mother working when my kids are at school. When Rileybelle gets home I am always working with her in one way or another in helping her live her best life. I am bathing her, dressing her, and everything that comes with her disability. This will be life long. I will be her paid care giver when she is older, why not now? Why not me? I am more than qualified and know my daughters needs better than anyone.

Please take our testimonies under serious consideration. Everyone is different, all of our children have different needs. This is not a situation you can put into your one size fits all box. We know our children better than anyone. We know what they need.

Putting SB 646 into effect ASAP would be what's best for our children. And that's what matters. Quality care from parents that already know what to do just makes sense any way you look at it.

Please pass the most inclusive legislation for the sake of our children. All we want is what is best for them in every way possible.

Thank you for your time.

