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To Chair Patterson, and the members of the Health Care Committee,

For the record, my name is Stephanie Willard. I am a licensed acupuncturist in the state of Oregon, a loss survivor, advocate, and a member of the Workforce Committee for the Oregon to Prevent Suicide. I am writing in support of SB-514.

On May 8, 2014, my husband Jesses' brain broke, and I came home to find that he shot and killed our four-year-old daughter Maribella, and himself.

Since then, I have advocated and testified on a number of bills in Oregon: HB48, HB2315, and several others. You know the statistics in Oregon regarding suicide attempts and completions, particularly among our youth (Oregon's suicide rate is 30% higher than the national average. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for Oregonians ages 10 through 44 and across the lifespan we lost 833 people to suicide in 2020 alone).

SB 514 establishes an Adult Suicide Prevention Coordinator within Oregon Health Authority. My husband was 34 years old when he died by suicide. He had his whole life ahead of him. He wanted to be a PA and help people.

This bill is critical in creating a position in the Oregon Health Authority to focus on Adult suicide prevention. Having worked with the Alliance to Prevent suicide in supporting the YSIPP since 2016, I have seen the success of having a dedicated coordinator for that. Adults deserve the same attention.

I am asking you to vote yes for this bill, vote yes to save the lives of countless adults who need support in this state.

Thank you,  
Stephanie Willard, Lac