

Jim Evangelista / SB233 SUMMARY of Hearing Testimony March 19, 2025 3 pm.

Thank you Senator Prozanski and members of the Judiciary Committee for scheduling today's hearing. .

I'm grateful to Senator James Manning for sponsoring SB233 with the goal of passage in this 2025 session. I am particularly honored to have this opportunity to be part of helping other Oregonians secure their legal right to file medical claims in parity with all other current statute of ultimate repose laws in Oregon.

In 2018 I had necessary surgery to remove defective hernia mesh. Thereafter, I began having prolonged severe abdominal pain. My primary care physician dismissed my complaints saying it should be expected and I had to live with it. Because I depended on him, this advice has cost me dearly.

Throughout COVID, my wife and I cared for my aging Mom at home until her passing and, together, kept our nonprofit organization managed; I often ignored my own pain and wellbeing until my spiking high blood pressure had me in the Emergency Room. The ER doctor encouraged me to visit the surgeon who removed the mesh saying, "she would likely have a piece for my puzzle." I am grateful she pointed me in the direction of the truth.

During several visits with the surgeon, she injected me with cortisone suggesting it would help. More than five years after the surgery to remove the defective hernia mesh, my surgeon acknowledged, she had used sutures that would not dissolve and were caught in a bundle of nerves. Another surgery was scheduled and the sutures were removed. Unfortunately, the nerves were badly damaged and my pain persists.

My inability to accomplish my responsibilities and the work of our nonprofit has been significant and very costly to our organization. Because of the trauma of living through this experience and the time it's taken for me to learn about the SOUR, I am worn out and feel hobbled.

Victims of medical injury live in trauma and often have hidden injuries as I experience. The current five years period to file a claim is too short to enable the patient to recognize the injury, to obtain an evaluation and diagnosis, and to seek medical and legal advice. SB233 offers a full measure of hope to Oregonians, who desperately need the time required to discover that they have been injured and to pursue claims for recovery of their damages.

SB233 is truly bi-partisan and a worthy opportunity to make common cause to bring renewed hope to all Oregonians, rural and urban, regardless of cultural, economic, political or social status. This will not require costs to our State, nor will it take away funding from another deserving line item. SB233 will protect and ensure the productivity and future well-being of individuals who might otherwise become a tax burden on the State.

As a person of faith and belief in justice, my heart tells me this is the right cause to support because it only does good and is balanced and fair. On behalf of so many other Oregonians, I want to thank each of you, in advance, for your vote of support of SB233.