



To: House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protections

Date: April 21, 2025

Hello Chair Sosa, Vice-chairs Chaichi and Osborne, and members of the Committee,

My name is West Livaudais. I had a spinal cord injury in 2013, and I'm the Executive Director of Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection. I'm here to provide public testimony in support of Senate Bill 550. A well-functioning wheelchair is the pulse of a wheelchair user's life. It allows them to do everything for those that need it.

Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection serves thousands of wheelchair users around the state. We host four Wheelchair Maintenance Workshops across the state - Medford, Klamath Falls, Eugene, and Portland. It's a community space where wheelchair users in acute need can find tools, parts, supplies, and support to fix their chairs, and learn in community. For many, it's a resource to keep their chairs well-maintained or get themselves out of an acute situation.

Every month wheelchair users come in with seized bearings, untrue wheels, or brakes that don't work. And to these wheelchair users, they feel unsafe in their chairs. They're coming to the Wheelchair Maintenance Workshop to find a solution. Many have waited six to eight weeks or longer to get basic maintenance and repairs on their wheelchairs.

There's two main reasons for these long wait times. First, durable medical equipment companies in Oregon are not reimbursed to provide preventative maintenance that prevent breakdowns. It's not profitable for them to provide repairs that keep chairs well maintained and the user moving. Secondly, wheelchair users are only allowed to purchase through their health insurance once every five years. They find themselves stuck between not having access to parts, supplies, information and tools to fix their own chairs and not being able to purchase a new chair through insurance. If they have a wheelchair a breakdown within their first five years. They're stuck. They don't have a supplier that will provide the service to repair their chair, and they can't get a new chair. So what do they do? Senate Bill 550 creates access to information, parts, and tools so that the wheelchair community in Oregon can keep their chairs well maintained and moving and so they can be healthy.

Thank you very much for supporting Senate Bill 550!

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

West Livaudais  
Executive Director