

Testimony in Support of HB 4040, Section 8 (House Healthcare Omnibus Bill)

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Nelson & Diehl, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dianna Hansen, and I am writing in strong **support of Section 8 of HB 4040**, the portion of this omnibus bill that removes prior authorization requirements for **wheelchair and complex rehabilitation technology repairs under \$1,500** and establishes clear timelines for higher-cost repairs.

My brother-in-law, Cole, has a traumatic brain injury and uses a wheelchair 100% of the time. His wheelchair is not a convenience, it is his only means of mobility, independence, and dignity.

There have been multiple times when Cole needed urgent repairs to his one and only chair. In one particularly alarming situation, one of the wheels fell completely off. Despite the urgency, it took four weeks—yes, four weeks—to receive approval for the repair.

During that time, Cole was forced to crawl around his home. He could not bathe independently. He could not reach the microwave to heat his meals. He relied on cold food and whatever assistance we could provide, when at the time, we lived an hour and a half away. His basic health, safety, and dignity were compromised, not because the repair was complex, but because the system was slow and rigid.

At one point, I even tried to purchase a new wheelchair out-of-pocket so Cole could get around while waiting for repairs. I was told this was not allowed, that they could not even sell me a chair because Cole is covered by Medicaid. The result was that he was left without mobility, by rule, not necessity.

This is inhumane and cruel.

HB 4040, Section 8 addresses this exact problem. Allowing repairs under \$1,500 to proceed without prior authorization, and requiring decisions within 72 hours for higher-cost repairs, is both reasonable and compassionate. These timelines recognize that wheelchairs are not optional equipment. When they break, people's lives stop.

All people deserve the ability to move around in the ways they are able. Long timelines and cumbersome systems for simple repairs should never be the barrier that takes away a basic human right.

I urge you to support section 8 of HB 4040 and ensure that Oregonians who rely on complex rehabilitation technology are not left stranded in their own homes without a reliable way to ambulate.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianna Hansen, Tumalo, Oregon
Cole's primary caregiver and sister-in-law