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House Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Good afternoon Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Diehl and Nelson, and members of the committee:

My name is Nicole Ver Kuilen. I serve as Director of Impact Campaigns for the Amputee Coalition, representing 75,000 people with limb loss and limb difference living here in Oregon. Although my role spans all 50 states, I am proud to call this region home, living just outside of Portland.

I am also a member of the limb loss community. Last year, many of us testified before this exact committee in support of SB 699, which expanded access to prosthetic and orthotic care for physical activity. That law passed unanimously out of all committees and both chambers last session, and made Oregon a national leader—now one of twelve states that have enacted this legislation through the *So Every BODY Can Move* movement. Thank you again for your support of that critical legislation last session.

I am here today in support of the dash 7 amendment to HB 4040.

This amendment removes the phrase “not solely for comfort or convenience” from statute when defining access to prosthetic and orthotic care. That language is outdated and ableist, and Oregon is now one of the only states in the country that still includes it. Importantly, this is a simple fix, and is not a new or controversial change. An amendment effectively identical to this one was posted to the record before a public hearing in this committee last year without a single note of opposition to this specific provision. As language was reorganized to accommodate stakeholders on other aspects of the initial bill and support smooth implementation for health plans, this provision was inadvertently left behind. Knowing it was a simple clerical error, and with the 2025 session coming quickly to an end, our bill sponsors and advocates decided to return in the 2026 short session to make this small fix.



I want to be clear: there is nothing comfortable or convenient about losing a limb or living with a disability. There is nothing comfortable or convenient about relying on a prosthesis or orthosis. These devices are not luxuries. They are medical tools that allow people like me to work, care for our families, and live independently. None of us would choose them over our natural limbs—but they are essential to our participation in daily life.

The dash 7 amendment simply modernizes Oregon law to reflect that reality, while maintaining an insurance plan's ability to determine the medical necessity of a device.

I respectfully urge you to adopt this amendment and ensure that Oregon's statutes reflect dignity, equity, and access for people with disabilities.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Nicole Ver Kuilen

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