



Office of Senator Sara Gelser Blouin

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**Press Contact:**

Tess Seger, [Tess.Seger@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Tess.Seger@oregonlegislature.gov)

## **Oregon Senate Extends Parent Caregiving Program**

**SALEM, Ore.** - Today, the Oregon Senate responded to the call of families of children with significant disabilities by establishing a permanent program to allow parents to serve as their attendant care providers. [Senate Bill 91B](#) passed unanimously. The measure ensures that children with the most complex needs have access to the support they need to thrive in the community and that parents can meet the financial needs of their families.

“Children with disabilities do best when they grow up in their family homes with their parents and siblings,” said **Senator Sara Gelser Blouin (D-Corvallis)**, who carried SB 91 on the Senate floor and worked extensively with parents and disability advocates to craft this legislation.

“SB 91B ensures this is possible for children with the most significant behavioral and medical needs. Meeting these needs sometimes prevents parents from working outside the home, making it even harder to make ends meet. This measure will allow parents to be paid for the disability related support they provide to their children, ensuring that all members of the family can thrive.”

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government prohibited the use of Medicaid funds to pay parents of minor children for providing these services. However, during the pandemic an exception was allowed due to the workforce shortage and the need for medically fragile children to be isolated to avoid COVID exposure. This option was used by many states, and now the Centers for Medicaid Services announced that states may create permanent programs to pay parents who are required to provide care that is considered “extraordinary” and beyond the scope of typical parenting responsibilities.

“This bill passed because of the diligent advocacy, research and persistence of Oregon families,” said **Gelser Blouin**. “It is an example of how policy always works best when it is inspired, informed and led by the people it is designed to serve.”

SB 91B is one of the hundreds of bills that Senate Democrats rescued by negotiating an end to the Senate Republican walkout. Thanks to Senate Democrats showing up, doing their jobs, and

delivering results for the people of Oregon, SB 91B now moves to the House of Representatives.

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