

Memo

To: Joint Subcommittee on Human Services: Co-chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-chair Representative Rob Nosse, Senator Dallas Heard, Senator Rob Wagner, Representative Cedric Hayden, Representative Andrea Salinas, Representative Sheri Schouten, & Representative Duane Stark

From: Ronita Shaw, Parent

Date: February 13, 2019

Subject: Testimony - SB 5026

Hello, my name is Ronita Shaw. My son, Kenan is 27 years old. He really likes taking care of animals, racing his remote control cars at events, and riding horses. Kenan also experiences Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. (I/DD) Kenan was born with Lennox Gastaut Syndrome, a sleep disorder, anxiety disorder, and Autism. Kenan lives with 24-hour supports in Salem Oregon. He needs a great deal of support to remain safe, happy and healthy. The Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) that support Kenan help him in all aspects of his life including intimate personal care. DSPs support Kenan to be part of his community. The DSP's that support him know him well and they make sure he knows what to expect and to be safe doing it. For Kenan, this requires very skilled support. He loves it. Without this, he would be isolated in his home. Keenan thrives on getting out and living life. On visits to his favorite places, he is always engaging people around him with a smile and a joke. If he was not able to do this, his frustration would overwhelm him. He would take that frustration out physically on his home surroundings and those around him. His behavioral support would need to be dramatically increased to help him through this and I am not even sure that would work.

Thanks to services he receives he has the support he needs to live a good life and has the help he needs not only to stay safe but find activities that he enjoys. Keenan depends on his highly skilled DSP's and when they leave for higher paying jobs Kenan gets very confused and hurt. Sometimes he asks for a certain DSP over a year after they have left. As a parent this is heartbreaking. This needs to get resolved and the only

way I see this happening is through higher wages so DSP's can stay longer with the people who need them.

Please make DSP wages a priority in your budget. People like my son Kenan are counting on you. Thank you for your time.