



Dear members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Tiffani Olsen, and I am the director of Shangri-La's residential program that serves adults with IDD (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities). In my program we serve over 120 people in Marion, Lane, and Lincoln Counties in 24-Hour and Supported Living programs.

I am asking that you VALUE THE WORK and RAISE THE WAGE of Direct Support Professionals.

This last year has been like no other! From the increased expenses and requirements related to the pandemic, to the need for increased planning around natural disasters. Providers are doing everything in their power to keep this vulnerable population healthy, safe, happy, and staffed with the vital DSP workforce needed to make this happen. We need your help.

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) provide crucial supports to people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their work includes managing medical needs, behavioral health supports, intimate care and support to maintain employment and make real connections in the community. While DSPs are NOT state employees – their work is almost entirely funded by state and federally matched funds (average of 98.2%).

Our turnover has averaged 40% or higher, which was unmanageable prior to the pandemic. Due to the average wages of DSPs, we are now competing with not only fast food and coffee shop wages, but also unemployment benefits being higher than DSP wages. This has put providers in a terrible situation. We have no means of raising prices to keep up with the increased expenses and the bottom line is that people's lives are counting on the DSP workforce.

How to get there:

POP 119 - \$34.4M GF

This closes the hole from 2019-21/rolls up to 21-23 and ensures no significant rate/wage reductions. Includes 3.2% across the board rate increase in the current rate models in the 1st year of the biennium and new rate models in 2nd year of biennium.

Average DSP Wage: \$14.82

+

Get in touch.

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POP 120 - \$36.6M GF

This funds rates and wages to about 80% of full funding needed, or about a 3% rate increase across the board.

Average DSP Wage: \$15.31

+

Fully Funded Rate Model - \$48.8M

Average DSP Wage: \$17.81

+

HB 2964 – \$110.2M

This policy bill ensures direct support professionals are funded at least 150% of the metro area minimum wage.

Average DSP Wage: \$21.00

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this vital workforce!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Olsen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tiffani Olsen

