

My gender is "it" and my race is non-human. I receive services for my disabilities. Why do I use the terms "it/ non-human"? I use the term it/non-human because that is the way I'm treated within the system.

I am here today to speak about DSP (Direct Support Provider) wages.

I am told that there is a bill put forward HB 2964 concerning DSP wages. This is a good start but we also need to give them benefits that will help them out. I have a really good team of DSPs and I would very much like to hold on to them. The only way I can hold on to them is if they're paid a living wage, if not better, have paid time off, have health insurance that actually is health insurance not just catastrophic care and get proper compensation for business expenditures. This will also draw in new caregivers.

On case management: our case manager's case loads need to be reduced down to 25 and no more. That includes case managers and PAs. We need full funding for our case managers and PAs. I believe that they're only funded at 70% now. They need to be funded at the full 95% and also their case loads need to be dropped down to 25.

I would also like to include a few words on getting a database system for the brokerages and county case management. We badly need a database system to collect information. Everybody asks us for cold hard facts and numbers. Problem is, we don't have a database with which to collect these numbers. It would greatly help us out and help out our efforts to advocate and control spending if we could get a database system in place.