



Education Service District

Region 18 – Wallowa County

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Serving: Joseph School District #6, Wallowa School District #12, Enterprise School District #21, Troy School District #54

January 24, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of HB 2500, which will provide funding for personal support workers serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This bill will benefit residents of Wallowa County, as well as other remote/rural counties in Oregon.

Wallowa County, which is located in the northeast corner of Oregon, covers a total area of 3,152 square miles. Residents are dispersed throughout that area, in and around the small towns of Enterprise, Joseph, Wallowa, Lostine, Troy, and Innaha. Transportation can be a barrier to employment for individuals in our county, especially for those living in the geographically isolated outlying areas.

As superintendent of the Wallowa County ESD, I am fully aware of the challenges that students and families face getting to/from school, work and community activities. For our students with disabilities, lack of transportation options can be detrimental. As adults, they will need assistance in order to maintain steady jobs and access community services. Personal support workers can provide that assistance and should be compensated for the miles they cover to do their jobs. Considering the current price of fuel and vehicle maintenance, a mileage stipend for these workers just makes sense.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this bill. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Nordtvedt
Superintendent
Region 18- Wallowa County ESD