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On Behalf Of:	
Committee:	Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure:	SB646

I wish that PPP was something that was a reality for our family.

I don't know why the evaluation process and subsequent benefit/hours assignment are so wildly variable from client to client, and county to county. We conduct the DD interviews and assessments as though we are speaking from our daughter's worst days, which have regularly included physical violence, property destruction, self harm and endangerment, not being able to attend school, elopement, and more. But we are still clocking in at only being eligible for about 90 hours per month!!!!!

That said, we haven't even been successful at using those hours. This is due to the extreme difficulty in finding an appropriate PSW/DSP who can develop the necessary trust and rapport with our daughter while also being qualified to manage the worst of her behavior. She has diagnoses of autism (pathological demand avoidance type), Nonverbal learning disability, bipolar, general anxiety disorder (including school and social anxiety), and more. Our ABA experience has been the most helpful therapy/intervention that we've done so far, and the skills we have all gained as a result will allow a caregiver to be able to come into the home with more effective tools and strategies. So in addition to being able to manage an adult sized girl's physically violent meltdowns without causing more trauma, our PSW/DSP has to be able to work effectively with the specific behavior plan that our team has developed over the last 3 years.

We've had monumental financial challenges as a result of only having one income and a child with developmental disabilities. Between mounting medical bills and only one income, we filed for chapter 13 bankruptcy several years ago, and then converted to chapter 7 last year. I was not able to hold a regular job for the 12 years since Rosalyn was born, because someone always had to be with her. Now, I am currently working a full-time job (40 hours/week @ $22/hour) that does not even meet our basic expenses. Martin's job prospects are slim with his now limited availability and flexibility because someone has to be at home with R at all times. We also have the added element of R's significant social anxiety and crippling self esteem, which limits her ability to go out into the community or visit with non-family members willingly, without major duress and risk of meltdown.

Martin did sign up with an agency recently, so hopefully they can steer us toward some available providers, but the initial feedback was that Clackamas County is experiencing a sever shortage of qualified care providers. We can always sign up with other agencies concurrently to increase our chances of finding the kind of caregiver Rosalyn needs. If Rosalyn had been eligible for more hours and we had access to PPP, it would have been an absolute game changer for us -- especially during the pandemic, when we lost our live-in caregiver (my mother moved out), when Martin left his high stress academic position, when we were eventually homeless and relying on family to help us get by. It would have made a huge difference in our family's ability to navigate a difficult time and recover more quickly.

I'm not sure that we can be of any help to move the current legislation forward, since we do not qualify for PPP at this time due to the number of hours R is eligible for. We have been working within a broken system for so long, trying to move forward anyway -- without necessary supports for Rosalyn, for the health and well being of our family, or for the stability of our marriage. We will continue to advocate for increased hours for Rosalyn's DD eligibility, and try to find someone who is up to the challenge (and the joy!) of working with her over the long term. But we won't be able to be on the front lines of this fight.

Thank you for being a tireless advocate on behalf of the families who need and are eligible for the PPP option. I pray that we'll be in that group someday.