

Hello!

My name is Karen Krieger, my husband is Ariel Balter. (He is also giving testimony.) Our son is Tov Balter, he is 15 years old. He has Autism, PDA, OCD, and DMDD. We are what is often called 'extreme parents', and are currently paid parent providers.

I'm in favor of all 3 proposed measures.

I could write a very lengthy essay with my thoughts, experiences and knowledge about the PSW/DSP system. But I'll keep it short and speak only to the high points.

Having the ability to be a paid parent provider has really helped my son. He is often dysregulated and irritable and angry. He has low frustration tolerance and low impulse control. It is very difficult for us to find anyone who wants to work with him and who he will accept. My husband and I are definitely his main support people. We do currently have a part time DSP and feel fortunate about that, but he will be leaving soon. It will be difficult to find another PSW/DSP.

We went \*many\* years with little or no DSP support, even though we desperately needed the help. I think this makes it difficult to predict the budget, as I know this is very common. Kids with PSW/DSP hours that are not being used due to lack of available employees. The recent pay raise was a great improvement for hiring and retention, but the fact is, it is incredibly difficult to find people to work with special needs kids in their homes.

My husband and I supporting our son in the unique way he requires has reduced trips to the hospital and is keeping him out of a state funded group home/institutions which would likely cost the state more.

The PPP needs to be inclusive to help support all kids that qualify for PSW/DSP hours. Other states have this option in place and I believe Oregon should follow for better care for our children who need the most support.

I think that Oregon trying out the PPP was a silver lining to COVID. The program has now been trialed, thanks to the pandemic. And it seems obvious to me that it is better for our kids and families and ultimately saves the state money.

Thank you for your time.

-Karen Krieger