

Submitter: Janette Slagle

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2457

As the owner of a small provider agency, I have first-hand experience not only with how difficult it is to find and retain DSPs that provide consistent and quality supports, but I've also seen the difference it makes in the lives of the individuals with I/DD that we serve, and in turn their families, the places they work (or would like to work), and the communities around them. This is absolutely not a minimum wage job. In fact, the best DSPs that I have and that have stayed long-term are the ones who have been able to consider this a career.

The need for supports has always been there- and the need for jobs/careers where employees are paid well, treated well, and can feel like they're making a difference has always been there. But it's different now compared to the first couple years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Families of individuals with I/DD are beyond exhausted. Individuals we support are still isolated and withdrawn more than anyone should be. And potential DSPs who would have the training and aptitude to help are burnt out, struggling financially, and don't want/can't afford to give to a job that can't replenish and sustain them.

If there's ever a way that can help pour back into the communities of Oregon to help it heal and thrive economically, socially, mentally- this is it. And that can only happen with growth by way of more DSPs.

I support HB 2457.