

Submitter: Angel Schwendler

On Behalf Of: Albertina Kerr

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2457

Having held a Direct Support Professional for the last 6 years I have worked firsthand on the front lines support these amazing and unique individuals. The people I care for are often experiencing emotional or mental health issues as well as some having developmental disabilities. That being said as much as I help to support and care for my clients and enjoy their day to day life, it goes without saying that DSP's often work long hours while experience staffing shortages, are expected to be able to stay in the event of non-coverage and are often held to high expectations to maintain stability in the lives of our clients we care for, yet often we have to neglect our own families and personal lives to adhere to serving the people we support to make money to live. Still after working such long hours, I cannot manage to live solely on my own and need a roommate for support. Paying rent, bills and buying groceries is a constant struggle. While working with individuals who are experiencing emotional and mental health issues can often be challenging in itself. Staff members are often placed in dangerous situations when handling crisis situations requiring needing interventions to support our clients who may be struggling. DSPs should receive this increase because we are placed in potentially dangerous situations daily to make a living that still does not cover the cost of daily living expenses.