



Oregon  
Community  
Brokerages

February 8, 2023

To: Rep Reynolds, Chair, House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services  
From: Katie Rose, Executive Director, Oregon Community Brokerages  
RE: HB 2457, tying average direct support compensation to 150% of minimum wage

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Chair Reynolds and members of the committee,

Oregon Community Brokerages is an association of the 14 Support Services Brokerages currently operating across the state of Oregon. We serve more than 7,500 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) living in their own or family homes, providing them with the case management and supports needed to connect them to community resources and direct service providers where they live.

We all get support from the people around us, some of it paid and some of it unpaid. We want those supports to be well trained, and there when we need them. One of the most important resources people with IDD have is the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce. DSPs give people with IDD the support they need to be full members of their communities and live the life they choose. Direct support is helping someone track and pay their bills so they can stay in their apartment. Direct support is supporting someone to build the skills needed to maintain a job. Direct support is making sure that a person with complex medical needs can choose to live at home with their family and stay safe while doing so. This is difficult and rewarding work that is critical to people and communities across Oregon, which is why we are pleased to support HB 2457.

HB 2457 recognizes that direct support is complex, skilled work that should be compensated above minimum wage, and kept at 150% of that mark as our economy grows. By building in the expectation that these wages keep pace with the economy, we ensure that lawmakers know from the start of each session how much these services cost.

As members of the IDD case management workforce, Support Service Brokerages know that the service system grinds to a halt when there are no DSPs available for hire. Case managers spend countless hours attempting to find available providers to connect with the people they support. All too often, there are no provider agencies with staff capacity. When this happens, a person's goals of finding a job or learning home skills to move out on their own, go nowhere. Services that people so desperately need and are entitled to go unused without a skilled provider.

HB 2457 will bring stability to DSP wages and recognize that this is not minimum wage work. Our society desperately needs more people to enter the caregiving professions. By creating a stable foundation of funding, we can attract qualified, committed people to learn and grow in this field. And by paying them a living wage, we ensure that those capable, experienced employees can afford to stay and do the work they love for the long-term.

We ask you to demonstrate Oregon's appreciation for this valuable direct support community by passing HB 2457. Oregonians with IDD deserve a stable foundation.