

February 8, 2023

Testimony in support of HB 2457

My name is Charles Tupper of Central Oregon Collective, a not-for-profit organization that supports about 30 Oregon citizens with disabilities and 50 staff in Deschutes County.

I am writing in support of HB 2457. This bill would ensure that our staff would make 150% of minimum wage, as well as covers the increase cost from the Paid Leave Oregon Payroll Expense.

Last session you provided funding for the rate model. Thank you so much for that investment as it kept our doors open. This bill allows us to pay staff competitive wages now and ongoing (we are already paying more than \$4.00 an hour over the rate model in order to attract and keep staff) in our counties toughest staffing crisis to date.

The majority of our staff lives outside of Bend due to the high cost of living, this rate would help to retain staff that deal with fuel price increases and cost of living in Bend if more of them could afford to live closer to where they work. A number of staff has commute of over a hundred miles to work at a job where they feel passion and purpose. This funding would help us to better retain those and other employees. Staff turnover is costly for the company financially and emotionally for those that we support. We believe that the higher rates will equate to better employee retention and increase our workforce so that we can grow as a company in order to better serve those that are in need of services.

Please vote yes on HB 2457. Our staff and the people they support are counting on your support!

Sincerely,

Charles S. Tupper (Behavior Professional, OIS Instructor and Senior Manager)
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