

February 9, 2023

My name is:

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Dear Early Childhood and Human Services Committee Hearing,

My name is Liana Duffield I am writing you to support **Oregon's HB 2457**, please support this to reduce turnover and create a living wage for DSP's (Direct support professionals).

We can no longer turn our back on Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (IDD). The safety and security of Oregonians with Developmental Disabilities relies on current funding levels. These vulnerable adults need your help.

- DSP vacancy rate of 23% Turnover is extremely high & stifles supports
- DSP wages rose significantly after you agreed to fund the current rate model last session. Thank you for this investment. We would not have survived without it and we need to protect and enhance this investment going forward.
- The pandemic and changing workforce has continued to erode our progress on wages. Even though providers consistently pay wages above the amount that is funded, we still struggle to hire and retain employees. This complicated, critical work is often paid less than fast food employees
- Per a recent ORA survey, 85% of providers are no longer accepting referrals to serve new people and 86% have reduced capacity or closed services and anticipate closing additional services

Individuals with IDD are struggling daily to have their own lives and to live as independently as they can. Over 85% of these individuals have battled child abuse, physical abuse, and financial exploitation. Providers like Living Opportunities partner with families and individuals to get housing, first in group homes and then eventually in independent apartments if they are capable. Several individuals through the support of companies like Living Opportunities become hardworking tax payers, pay their own bills and lives in apartments. These individuals still need support with cooking, cleaning, hygiene, managing their money and many other daily tasks. Without hardworking DSP's these individuals would never be able to live the best life they can.

**Please take action to save DSP who work with my brother.**  
**Support Oregon's HB 2457,**

Thank you for your time. I hope I can count on you for your support and I look forward to hearing back from you in the coming weeks.

Sincerely  
Liana Duffield