

Submitter: Nancy Horner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2457

I love being a DSP!! I started in the field at Fairview Training Center in 1995 and it's become my life's work. Unfortunately, as a single parent, I cannot just work one job. I work 80+hours a week. Still, any hiccups in my ability to earn (such as Covid or my kids being sick) results in my pto being quickly used up, if it hasn't been already and I've had a couple gaps in income the last couple years. I've gotten eviction notices, shut off notices for my electricity and had to go to court to try to resolve an eviction. I have to choose between making a car payment, the phone bill or car insurance. We go to local food shelves to help get us to the next payday. My car has needed new tires and brakes for at least a year...so I'm picking up extra shifts to try to get it done. I think it's awful, with the decades of experience I have...in a field that I'm responsible for caring for other people, administering insulin, doing full cares, teaching, etc...that I have to work so much and skip sleeping just to pay basic bills. I've seen so many people decide that they can't survive as a DSP, quit to go into other fields. We lose so many amazing people to that...we're short staffed to the point that current DSPs are tired and overworked. There are clients who either get no services or very minimal services because there simple aren't enough DSPs. Low pay affects a company's ability to recruit and keep staff, resulting in terrible staff turnover. Many clients have several staff coming and going and that results in disruption of routine, not to mention the loss that they feel from continually losing their caretakers. It's time for clients and DSPs to be recognized as important and be supported and compensated to reflect that importance.