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To: Early Childhood and Human Services Committee Hearing

HIGH IMPORTANCE! Please Support HB2457

I have spent 22 years providing direct support and managing staff in Jackson County. After 22 years I still love my job. That's because I have watched a steady improvement in the quality of people's lives because of the supports my committed and dedicated staff provide. That is why I am writing to express great concern over the 2023-25 budget.

Through the last three years of COVID I watched my staff work long challenging shifts in full PPE. Many of them had their own health issues that made COVID a life threatening illness. I thought this was a wonderfully selfless act but when I thanked them, they would tell me it was because "They really needed the money."

The services they provide are complicated and multifaceted. It requires a high level of skill and hours of training to adequately support people with IDD. They care for the most vulnerable and challenging people in Oregon. Often to their own financial and physical detriment. How am I to ask that of someone without providing adequately for their needs? I'm tired of providing them a list of where and when the local food banks are available or where to go for rent assistance when their paycheck doesn't quite make it to the end of the month. What quality of support is someone supposed to provide if they're on the verge of not being able to feed their child or keep a roof over their head? They show up day after day when many others simply walk away. I can't count the number of good staff I have lost to a "job that (expletive) but at least I can pay my bills."

I know Oregon faces a number of huge challenges that need funding right now, affordable housing, homelessness, how do we address a changing environment and allow farmers and ranchers to continue their work? It must be daunting work and I am grateful for all your effort.

HB2457 isn't a special interest bill, it serves all Oregonians by taking care of the hard working people throughout the state. I applaud your efforts to improve the quality of life for all Oregonians. **Please Support HB2457**

THANK YOU!

Mark Davis
Talent, Or.