

Submitter: Jenny Council

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2457

In my role as an Information Technology manager, I have supported frontline care staff at various developmental disability support agencies in Oregon over the last decade.

In this time I have seen major shifts in the skill level required of direct support staff, especially technology skills, as state tracking and reporting requirement have increased to improve safeguarding and oversight for this highly vulnerable population.

I don't think it is well understood to folks outside these agencies, that in order to meet these reporting and data tracking mandates, the same staff who help individuals with daily hygiene, who cook their meals, also need significant technology and accurate data entry skills.

Direct service staff are, of course, also required to understand and implement all the legal requirements for the safe care of disabled people, including safe medical and behavior management, incident reporting, mandatory abuse reporting, first aid etc.

What may have once been a low-skill "care" job decades ago, has grown to require skilled personnel who have an unusual combination of compassion, aptitude for technology, accurate data entry skills, first aid and medical management skills and the intelligence to make independent judgement calls upon which the health and safety of our states most vulnerable depend.

Such skills can't be bought for minimum wage; there's no comparison to shelf stacking, fast-food service or any other minimum wage job that I can think of.

Please support HB2457