

Submitter: Sarah Carleton

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human
Services

Measure: HB5026

February 27, 2023

Co-Chair Campos and Valderrama,

I write to offer my support for a fully funded I/DD budget. In 2021, the Legislature made historic investments in services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and for the first time the I/DD system was FULLY FUNDED. Even though this investment allowed us to increase wages for DSPs by \$1.25 an hour (current average reimbursement wage for DSPs at \$17.81), we still struggle with staff shortages. We must continue to move the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce out of crisis. Additional increases in wages are needed to address the current workforce shortage.

Please protect your investment and continue fully funding I/DD rates while prioritizing DSPs!

I specifically urge you to support:

? ODDS's POP 132 – Targeted Rate Increase estimated to cost \$162M

? Includes wage inflation and rate increases that bring DSP wages in payment category 1 to \$19.36, payment category 2 to \$20.38, and to \$22.42 in payment category 4 in the first year of the biennium. Increases the health insurance assumption to \$628.45 (currently \$525) per employee per month and adds the 0.4% employer Paid Leave Oregon payroll tax pick-up.

? HB 2457 – 150% of Minimum Wage + 1% Paid Leave Oregon Pick-up estimated to cost \$116.9M

? This bill will make further investments into DSP wages – because DSP work is not minimum wage work! HB 2457 statutorily sets DSP wages across the state at 150% of the metro minimum wage and includes the full 1% Paid Leave Oregon pick up (.4% Employer + .6% Employee pick-up).

Please value the work and raise the wage!

My personal testimony of this issue. Is that it has been hard as a single female to pay for rent, food, and gas recently. These costs have increased dramatically in the last

year. Minimum wage is not enough to survive living in Oregon on. I have had to donate plasma and get payday loans to survive. Please make Oregon a good place to live by providing living wages plus more. Working as a DSP is hard work and we need to know a lot of procedures and health risks to work with our clients. This is not a minimum wage job!! To ensure we get good people to fill the role of DSP and honoring their talent and skills working with our clients our wages need to be increased!!

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Carleton