

Submitter: Kimberly Mintrone

On Behalf
Of:

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

Measure: HB5026

My name is Kim Mintrone and I am the Training and Legislative Coordinator for the Oregon Resource Association. We are a statewide network of disability service providers and we continually advocate alongside these organizations and their workforce of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). I ask that you please prioritize DD wages and support full funding of IDD services in HB 5026. I am asking that you not only protect your previous investment, but that you continue to help move this workforce out of crisis by supporting HB 2457 - it moves DSP wages to 150% of minimum wage. In my work here at ORA, I have constantly been reminded by the harsh reality that these dedicated organizations face as their ability to pay this incredible workforce of DSPs is at the mercy of what gets funded by legislature. These workers are doing amazing, hard work for Oregon's most vulnerable. Day in and day out these workers tend to high medical needs, intimate care, act as counselors, chefs, behavior support, and much much more. And yet these jobs are incredibly undervalued and underpaid. We need these investments in services to elevate this essential workforce to a living wage. Please support HB 2457 so that these DSPs can get an average wage matched to 150% of Portland's Minimum wage. This bill is a long-term solution and will have so much positive impact and relief for these disability service providers and their workforce. The people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities they support need care from a thriving workforce, not from folks who are burnt out and struggling to pay their bills. I ask again, please support HB 5026 alongside HB 2457 so we can start to actually Value the Work of DSPs, and Raise the Wage. So much hinges on this. We need to act NOW. Thank you.