

Submitter: SABRINA TAYLOR SCHMITT

On Behalf
Of:

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

Measure: HB5026

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human
Services -

In Support of HB 5026 – DHS Budget and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

In Support of HB 2457- Value the work and raise the wage- Increase the minimum
wage of DSPs to 150% of Oregon's Minimum wage.

I am writing because we need your help. At TVW, we serve 150 people with
disabilities, those living with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and other
disabilities. The people who do the direct coaching and support are skilled
professionals that deserve a sustainable wage. The ongoing workforce crisis has
harmed our ability to serve more people with disabilities and will continue to worsen
without your support.

I am writing to support 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 DSP wages by \$1.25 an hour, we still struggle with staff shortages across
the state. We must continue to move the Direct Support Professional (DSP)
workforce out of this crisis. Additional increases in wages are needed to address the
ongoing workforce shortage. Please protect your previous investment in our
workforce and continue fully funding I/DD rates, while prioritizing
DSPs!

We urgently need you to support the following:

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 invest further 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!

Covid and the ongoing labor shortage crisis have left us searching for employees who can support future individuals with disabilities. At the same time, inflation and the increase in wage-based competition continue to create hiring and retention challenges. As more Oregonians with Disabilities are born or move to our state, more DSPs will be needed. It makes your support on these issues all the more important. We are in an already impossibly competitive hiring market; help us stabilize and create a long-term method to fund the Oregon DSP workforce.

We ask that you support HB 5026 and HB 2457 to ensure that agencies serving people with disabilities can continue to recruit, maintain, and develop the future workforce that supports Oregonians with disabilities.

This link provides more information about the HB 2457 bill:

<https://oregonresource.box.com/s/of9s49qupwlqozg44qize9w65mxpde4n>

Thank you for your time and attention. Please help make a lasting impact.

Best regards,

Sabrina Taylor Schmitt
Board Vice President
TVW Inc.