

Submitter: Jennifer Hagerty
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

My name is Jennifer Hagerty of Eugene Oregon. I signed up to give testimony in person this evening however, my son's DSP called out for her scheduled shift.

I am writing to strongly encourage you to prioritize SB91 and see it through to the floor for a YES vote. As a mother of two minor children on the Autism spectrum, who also experience Ectodermal Dysplasias, Arnold Chiari Malformation, and seizure disorders. We have always struggled to find an appropriate support worker to fulfill their allotted hours. We have experienced a PSW who was unresponsive due to drug use while on the clock resulting in my then 4 year old eloping to be found on the side of the road by the Sheriff. We terminated this employee immediately and reported the situation to our case manager. She was permitted to return to work the following week for another family in town. To now have employees who consistently call out or no-call no-show for shifts.

The Paid Parent Caregivers option is NOT a new program. It is an existing program with current expenditures. I continue to hear Representatives mention funding concerns and question budget. SB91 would slightly increase costs due to the actual utilization of the allotted hours. So unless ODDS is allotting hours knowing that the workforce shortage will prevent fulfillment paying a parent vs. paying a non-parent costs the same. Parents are invested in the future and the over all well-being of their children. There is a dramatic difference in the level of care provided and the accountability that comes from a parent when compared to an agency employee.

Without paid parent providers our most vulnerable children are left without the care that they need and deserve. Parents will return to working off the clock to fill the needs left unmet by the workforce shortages and the caliber of employees available in the pool to hire. Please recognize the crisis that our families are facing and prioritize SB91 to allow paid parent support before May 11, 2023. We need SB91 and we need it now.