

Submitter: Jessica Allen

On Behalf Of: Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services

Measure, Appointment, or Topic: SB 725

Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Jessica Allen. I am from Milwaukie and am here in support of SB 725.

I am a Personal Agent, supporting adults with intellectual disabilities at Community Pathways, Inc. I have worked in this field for 14 years, ten of which I have served as a case manager. I started as direct care staff, which gave me the opportunity to learn about the ISP and risk documents, and how vital they are in supporting our customers.

I have had up to 42 people on my caseload, and I am unable to provide each of them with the adequate time and attention they deserve due to the ever-evolving and increasing paperwork and case management requirements.

Those of us who work in this field are very dedicated to our customers and the work. It is our responsibility to provide each individual with the thoughtful and specific supports that they need to live safe, self-determined lives.

I have encountered many situations with customers when they were in crisis—whether it was a mental health issue, medical emergency, domestic violence, or being a victim of a crime - and all other caseload work has to wait. This causes disruptions for others on my caseload when I don't have the time I need to manage everything.

This work is far too important to lose as many experienced and hardworking people as we do regularly, due to burnout. Reducing caseloads would greatly support longevity and allow us to provide the level of support our customers deserve.