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Senate Committee on Health Care
Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the committee

Service Employees
International Union
Local 503

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My name is Rachel Hansen, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of SEIU 503 in support of SB 538. Our union represents thousands of Personal Support Workers (PSWs) who provide essential supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in home and community settings, including children. SEIU 503 believes that support is best delivered when families have the freedom to choose the individualized options that meet their unique needs.

We are pleased to see that SB 538 addresses previously restrictive provisions that prevented parents from serving as PSWs. Instead of limiting parent providers to employment through Developmental Disabilities (DD) Agencies, this bill ensures families have access to more flexible and cost-effective options, such as the PSW model and the future implementation of the DD Agency with Choice model. These self-directed support options empower families, promote autonomy, and optimize resource allocation. By avoiding the imposition of the most expensive service option (DD Agencies) on families who may not require the highest level of support, the state can better allocate resources while maintaining high-quality care.

SB 538 also addresses potential conflicts of interest by ensuring that paid parent PSWs do not act as the "employer of record." Instead, another individual would assume this role, and a paid parent would designate an alternative legal representative to oversee or manage the child's individual support plan. These safeguards mirror existing provisions and ensure program integrity.

We appreciate the support of the Chief Sponsor and stakeholders involved in SB 538. This bill upholds the principles of choice and autonomy for families while safeguarding the integrity of support services for individuals with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

In unity,

Rachel Hansen
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