



March 26, 2025

To: Representative Hartman, Chair, and House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services

From: Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: House Bill 2150 with Dash-1 Amendment (Support)

To Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is a group of approximately 30 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equity, and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. Our members include the Oregon Self-Advocacy Coalition (a statewide coalition of people with I/DD or “self-advocates”), peer-based family support organizations, support services brokerages, advocacy organizations, and developmental disability providers and the DD Act Network Partners.

Providers and those they employ who support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities deserve fair wages and sustainable funding that account for cost-of-living increases to ensure quality care and independence for those they serve. Every day, providers and Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) empower individuals with IDD by fostering their independence, dignity, and connections to the communities in which they live. Despite their commitment to transform the lives of the clients they serve, stagnant rates and wages fail to honor the invaluable impact of their work.

The Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition supports House Bill 2150 with the Dash-1 amendment that calls upon the Department of Human Services to include annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) in provider contracts. Oregon’s home and community-based service providers have faced decades of



underfunding, leading to rates and wages that fail to account for inflation, increased living costs, and the true cost of employee benefits. Without COLAs, DSP wages remain static while the cost of necessities such as housing, food, and transportation continue to rise. Those facts make it increasingly difficult for workers to sustain themselves financially, which leads fewer people to enter the DSP workforce. Inadequate provider rates lead to lower wages for workers that threaten to interrupt services and supports by making it harder to attract and retain skilled professionals in this critical field.

The recent Rate & Wage Study, commissioned by the Oregon legislature and released in January 2025 provides concrete evidence of the financial shortfall that is destabilizing the workforce. The study found that an additional \$558 million is required to bridge the funding gap and prevent Oregon's IDD service system from falling further behind. By including COLAs in provider contracts, wages and benefits can be tied to an annual inflator such that increases in the cost of living are coupled with increased DSP wages and benefits.

Failing to implement COLAs jeopardizes the financial security of DSPs who foster independence, dignity, and community living for people with IDD. It also threatens the quality and continuity of care. High turnover rates lead to fewer longstanding relationships with the clients that DSPs serve. Those long-term relationships between providers, DSPs, and the persons with IDD are critical to understanding disability-related needs and maintaining continuity of services and care. While the DD Coalition hopes to see the Rate & Wage Study recommendations fully funded, incorporating COLA increases into provider contracts is a step in the right direction.

Reinforce the critical role these professionals play in the lives of people with IDD by supporting the Dash-1 amendment to HB 2150.