

Submitter: Clinton Hardy  
On Behalf Of: Oregon Supported Living Program  
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2150

Dear Oregon Legislator,

I am writing to urge your strong support for HB 2150 with the -2 Amendment. As a Program Manager at Oregon Supported Living Program, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Lane County, I witness firsthand the challenges that chronic underfunding presents to both the individuals we serve and the workforce that supports them. The financial strain on provider organizations has reached a critical level, and immediate legislative action is necessary to ensure the sustainability of these essential services.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) recently completed a study at the legislature's request, confirming a staggering \$558 million gap between what providers are currently being paid and the actual costs of delivering these vital services. This alarming disparity threatens the stability of Oregon's IDD service system and the well-being of thousands of Oregonians who rely on these supports to live safe, dignified, and fulfilling lives in their communities.

HB 2150, with the -2 Amendment, offers a pragmatic solution to prevent this funding gap from widening further by ensuring that DHS contracts with community provider organizations include an annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), tied to no less than the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This mechanism is essential in addressing the real and rising costs associated with delivering quality care, particularly as inflation continues to erode the financial viability of provider organizations.

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are the backbone of Oregon's IDD service system. These dedicated professionals perform complex and essential work, supporting individuals with personal care, behavioral health needs, employment assistance, and community integration. Yet, despite the critical nature of their work, DSP wages have not kept pace with inflation, leading to persistent workforce shortages, high turnover rates, and burnout. When providers struggle to offer competitive wages, it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit and retain the skilled workforce necessary to ensure continuity of care and high-quality services for individuals with IDD.

Without the cost-of-living adjustment proposed in HB 2150, Oregon risks further destabilizing an already fragile system. The consequences of inaction would be dire: more providers forced to reduce services or close their doors, families left without

essential supports, and individuals with IDD facing increased risks to their health, safety, and overall quality of life.

By supporting HB 2150 with the -2 Amendment, you have the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Oregonians with IDD and the workforce that supports them. I urge you to prioritize funding for IDD services in the 2025-2027 budget and ensure that provider organizations receive the financial resources necessary to sustain these critical programs.

Thank you for your time, attention, and commitment to Oregon's most vulnerable residents. I appreciate your consideration and would welcome any opportunity to discuss this issue further. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you would like additional information or to hear directly from those impacted by these funding challenges.

Best wishes,  
Clinton Hardy  
SLP Program Manager