

Submitter: Kyle Hardin

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2150

Honorable members of the committee,

My name is Kyle Hardin and I am a DSP at Oregon Supported Living Program (OSLP). I am writing to strongly support House Bill 2150-2, which seeks to increase wages for DSPs across our state. Every day, DSPs provide essential life-changing support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our work goes far beyond a typical job - we are caregivers, educators, advocates, and trusted companions to the people we support. We help individuals with daily living skills, medical needs, personal care, community integration, and emotional support. Our role is both challenging and deeply rewarding, requiring extraordinary patience, skill, compassion, and dedication.

Despite the critical nature of our work, DSPs are consistently undercompensated. The current wage levels make it difficult for dedicated professionals to sustain themselves financially. Many of my colleagues work multiple jobs or rely on public assistance, despite working full-time in a profession that requires specialized skills and emotional resilience. This financial strain leads to high turnover rates which ultimately impacts the quality of care and stability for the individuals we support. The proposed wage increase in HB2150 is not just about fair compensation, it's about recognizing the true value of our work.

Adequate wages will: Reduce staff turnover, providing more consistent and quality care for individuals with disabilities, attract more qualified and compassionate professionals to this vital field, improve the overall quality of life for both DSPs and the individuals we support, and recognize the professional skills and emotional labor required in our work.

The individuals we support deserve consistent, high-quality care. They are not just clients; they are members of our community who deserve dignity, respect, and the best possible support. By investing in DSPs through fair wages, we invest in the entire community.

I urge you to pass HB2150-2 and take a critical step toward valuing the essential work of Direct Support Professionals.

Respectfully,

Kyle Hardin, DSP

Oregon Supported Living Program