

To: Oregon State Legislature, Ways and Means Committee

From: Susan Hills

Direct Support Professional

Albertina Kerr

(360) 241-9242

RE: ODHS Budget Bill (SB 5526)

I am writing to urge you to pass SB 5526. I'm currently a DSP working with youth at Albertina Kerr. While I love what I am doing, the job can be an extremely difficult at times. We deal with a lot of challenging behaviors, which can result in DSPs being injured. Our job demands that we always be mentally agile. Unfortunately, because we don't earn an hourly wage that meets the cost of living, many of us are working excessive overtime hours, which leaves us exhausted and stressed out, and not as good at our jobs. We suffer, our families suffer, and the children we serve suffer, because the DSPs in their lives burn out and leave their positions. I feel that we would see fewer DSPs leaving their positions at Albertina Kerr if they were being paid a fair wage for the work they do, which would ultimately benefit the people we serve. I personally don't want to leave my position, but don't know how long I can keep working fifty and sixty hours a week at such a mentally demanding job.

I thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Susan Hills