

Submitter: Marci Kallinger
On Behalf Of: DSP's
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5526

Dear Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Human Services,

My name is Marci Kallinger and I am the Executive Director for the Ron Wilson Center in Monmouth Oregon. We support over 50 people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in their homes and community and employ over 100 DSP's. I am writing today to ask you to please make IDD Services a priority in your budget making decisions. I know you all are very informed regarding the Wage and Rate Study and what the results were of it; that 558 Million Dollar Gap. I am a realist and know that this is a huge ask and that you may not be able to get there. With that said, I implore that you give us enough to be able to adequately raise wages for our critical workforce, our DSP's. Currently RWC's average wage is \$19.96 an hour and we are only reimbursed through our current rate model an average of \$18.84 an hour. This means that RWC is paying our DSP's over a dollar an hour more for each hour worked at our agency, and this does not include overtime numbers. I have to pull from other areas of our budget and am slowly depleting our reserves each month to continue to pay these wages and retain a workforce. It is frightening to think where we will be in two years if there is not a significant enough of an investment into our DSP workforce! Please consider the position that providers like RWC are in right now when you are creating your budget priorities. Along with this, please pass HB 2150-2 that will apply a COLA to our rates each year so we can eventually stop the vicious circle of always having to play catch-up.

Thank you for your service to our state, respectfully,
Marci Kallinger
Executive Director
Ron Wilson Center