

Submitter: Marci Kallinger  
On Behalf Of: DSP's and the people they support  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Greetings Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Marci Kallinger and I am the Executive Director at the Ron Wilson Center in Monmouth. We support over 50 people who have Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and employ over 100 DSP's. I recognize that you all have some very difficult decisions to make over the next few weeks but I am asking that you will prioritize DSP wages in some way during your budget conversations and decisions. Our wage range at RWC for DSP's right now is \$18 - \$22 per hour with our average wage being \$19.96 per hour. With our current rate model, we are only reimbursed an average of \$18.84 an hour which means that on average, we pay over a dollar more an hour for each hour worked every single day. This adds up to several thousand dollars each month that we spend on DSP wages that we are not reimbursed for. As a result, I am forced to pull money from other areas and/or continue to use our reserves which is being depleted a little bit more each month. Unfortunately, there are not too many things I can do to increase our revenue, those decisions are left up to you. (And it should remain that way which is why I oppose HB 3838) You have heard from many of us about the \$558 million ask which I know is a very high number. I am respectfully requesting you to begin closing our gap by allocating IDD Services enough money to be able to raise wages to stay competitive and help providers to stop having to rely on our reserves to get by every month. Reserves don't last forever so things need to change now so we can keep providing supports in the future. Another way to support DSP wages is to pass HB 2150-2 which will allow COLA increases for our very deserving DSP's. This will allow a built in inflator to the new rate model so we can stop this vicious cycle of always falling behind and then playing catch-up with wages.

Thank you for your service to our wonderful state.

Best Regards,  
Marci Kallinger  
Executive Director  
Ron Wilson Center