

Opposition to 3838 Workforce Standard Board

Attn: Esteemed Members of the House Committee on Rules

My Name is Carol Davis, President of the Board of Directors at TVW Inc. I have worked with this industry for over 35 years and strongly oppose 3838.

3838 is the wrong answer to supporting people with disabilities and increasing wages for Direct Support Workers (DSP).

The solution is to follow the recommendations made by the State legislation in the DSP rate study commissioned by the legislative body. It outlines the fiscal need to pay DSPs a fair wage in Oregon. The answer is that it is time for our state leaders to make the fair wage a reality.

I understand that this morning, Monday, April 28th, 2025, Amanda Dalton reminded the House Committee on Rules that a signed union caregiver contract with the state included an agreement restricting State agencies from supporting rate increases for DSPs. Why would a group so focused on improving wages for DSPs add a clause in their contract with the state to disallow the state from supporting those wage increases. That hurt all agencies in Oregon while we are fighting for better wages for our staff. Better wages for DSPs will help attract and keep people who are committed to the work they do and to the results they work for.

We need the state to support Medicaid rates that pay workers a living and professional wage. 3838 will be a waste of time and money, as well as cause a disruption to the critical work of Oregon's nonprofits, which will only do more harm. Today, the supporters of 3838 said we might not see rate changes until 2030. How can this possibly be the answer? If you want to help DSPs and the people they serve, please fund the study rate and add a cost-of-living increase. This is the straightforward, proven, studied solution to the problem.

We do not need a special interest group to tell us how to improve our system. We have known about the rate problems for years, and the State rate study confirmed it. Every session, we come to the capitol to remind lawmakers to assist us with our rates. We cannot raise the prices of our services to pay employees more; the State also sets those rates. So, as costs rise and wages rise, we operate our Medicaid program at a deficit every year. This is a situation that just can't continue. In the long run, this will be detrimental to the entire plans to support our clients. They need to come first.

Our elected body needs to support livable wages for Direct Support Workers today. This isn't work that can be delegated to a Board with other special interests. Please refer to the rate study, listen to your local nonprofits, and act now and oppose 3838.

Thank you,

Carol Davis