

Oregon Resource Association

2405 Front St. NE, Suite 150 | Salem, OR 97301
(503) 585-3337 | oregonresource.org



To: Senator Lieber, Representative Sanchez and Members of the Committee

Good evening, Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying on behalf of the Oregon Resource Association (ORA). We represent a network of about 100 primarily **nonprofit organizations that provide services to people with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities** across the state. These community provider organizations provide services to people in their homes and workplaces and help people connect to their communities. **At the heart of this vital work are Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)**, whose dedication makes this challenging yet deeply rewarding mission possible.

While we understand that making decisions about budget reductions is incredibly challenging, **we strongly urge you to protect services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities**. As you know, a DHS commissioned Wage and Rate Study determined that these services are **funded at levels that are 30% below the threshold of sustainability**. Community Providers are fully reliant on legislative funding. Many are already running at a deficit and quickly running out of reserves.

Eliminating or delaying the scheduled 2026 rate increase would have an immediate, negative impact on service capacity for people with IDD. Community providers already struggle to hire and retain DSPs, even though they are currently paying wages that are significantly above the reimbursement rate. Provider organizations are counting on the small increases scheduled for July in order to further bolster DSP wages and offset other rising costs. Without the increases it will be even more difficult to effectively compete for DSPs. This will make it more difficult for people with IDD and their families to find quality services.

We urge you to prioritize the stability of this workforce and to protect the small wage and rate increases that were approved by the 2025 legislature. This funding is essential to protect the health and safety of the Oregonians who rely on these services and the staff who support them.

Thank you for continuing to support Direct Support Professionals and your nonprofit community provider partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lois A. Gibson', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Lois Gibson, Executive Director Oregon Resource Association