

Partnerships in Community Living (PCL) Testimony  
Gary Zenzen, Executive Manager, Employment, Business and Community Development  
Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood  
Invited Testimony on eXPRS Implementation  
February 10, 2015, 3:00 pm, HR B

I am here today, speaking for PCL's executive team and Board of Directors, and as one of those "providers" Chris Burnett referred to in her testimony that are struggling to make sense out of a shifting service/business landscape. I'd like to offer some organizational perspective before we get into the important details of what brings us here. PCL, as a state contracted Service Provider, has been serving people living with an Intellectual and Developmental Disability in Oregon for 29 years. We help people live at home, choose careers and get jobs, and generally live life to its fullest, with all of the risk and rewards that entails.

PCL serves several hundred people in 6 counties spanning the state, employs nearly 800 workers, and holds justice before charity as central value guiding all of our service.

For the last 16 of our 29 years, we have held the belief that meaningful work for people living with developmental disabilities is at the center of living a full life. We have actively been following that belief with action, working with dozens of people to find fulfilling work as a state funded provider of employment services. We have embraced the sweeping policy changes happening at the state level regarding employment opportunities for people, and have invested heavily in keeping pace with the system changes.

However, for the first time in our history, we have to consider the poor sustainability of this service under this new model. Confusing funding streams, chaotic and conflicting direction, and what seems like a never ending increasing administrative burden have forced us to seriously evaluate whether we can continue to provide this service without substantial financial loss.

The specific issue we are here to grapple with today though is a critical one and is indicative of the intensity of the problems noted thus far. Simply put, it is choking the life out of our service capacity.

I would like to take a moment to thank Lilia Teninty and Don Erickson for their recent efforts to address this in a proactive way. We are looking forward to moving ahead with DHS in partnership and collaboration as is our trademark. Also, we have two of our own experts in attendance to answer any detailed questions you may have.