



SUNNY OAKS INC

Honorable Co-Chairs Bates and Nathanson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brian S. Varley, MS, and I am the Executive Director of Sunny Oaks, Incorporated. We are a small to medium sized private nonprofit with 119 paid employees that has served adults with development disabilities in residential, employment and day services in Polk and Marion Counties in Oregon beginning in 1973. We currently have 10 homes serving nearly 50 people with developmental disabilities, 2 day services programs (I.e. community inclusion and employment services) serving almost 30 people with developmental disabilities, and we have recently been approved to serve adult persons with developmental disabilities in Supported Living services. We have programs in Salem, West Salem, Dallas, Keizer, Monmouth and Silverton, Oregon.

Representing Sunny Oaks, Inc., I wish to thank you very much for the 4% budget adjustment benefiting our hardworking, dedicated and well trained Direct Support Professionals. They work extremely hard to help the people with disabilities we serve to have happy, healthier, safer and more independent lives in their homes, at their work and in their communities.

Sunny Oaks utilized the 4% budget adjustment to increase Direct Support Professional wages by 6-7% and for a 3% increase in health and dental insurance and other benefits for our Direct Support Professionals. Our starting hourly wage for Direct Support Professionals increased from \$10.25 to \$11.00 per hour. And, our Direct Support Professionals' actual average hourly wages increased from \$11.13 per hour to \$11.91 per hour.

Community; Learning, Living & Growing Together.

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Again, we wish to thank you very much for the 4% budget adjustment. This may help Sunny Oaks in retaining our current Direct Support Professionals and in recruiting new Direct Support Professionals. Sunny Oaks Direct Support Professional employee turnover rate can range from 25 to 30% or more annually. High employee turnover can negatively impact the people with developmental disabilities we serve as it requires significant resources and time to train new employees to the degree necessary to provide high quality supports needed to maintain safer, healthier, happier and more independent lives for people with developmental disabilities.

It's been my observation in over three decades of experience in this field in Oregon that when our economy slows, our employee turnover rates go down. And, the opposite is true in my experience when the economy grows and/or is strong. Our economy in Oregon seems to be moving toward the latter. This will most-likely mean our Direct Support Professional turnover rates will increase. In addition to these increased costs, Sunny Oaks is facing increased costs related to the new Sick Time requirements, Employee Break requirements, other requirements and increased costs of benefits, and the highly likely increase in the Minimum Wage.

In speaking for Sunny Oaks, I want thank you, again, for the 4% budget adjustment and hope that you may assist us further as we attempt to manage increased costs and maintain high quality supports for the people with developmental disabilities that we support well in their homes, their work and their communities.

Most Respectfully Submitted,

Brian S. Varley, MS
Executive Director
Sunny Oaks, Inc.