

February 15, 2016

To: House Business and Labor Committee
From: Gordon Diquattro
Re: Support of SB 1532A

Chair Holvey, members of the committee,

My name is Gordon Diquattro, and I am a 24-year-old direct support professional for Alvort Taylor in Eugene, and a SEIU Local 503 member.

I make about \$10.50 per hour, helping disabled people get through their day in the healthiest way possible. Currently I support a non-verbal, physically aggressive man who is 6'1" and 281 lbs.

Alvort Taylor's mission statement is to, "Provide as high a quality of life for its clients as possible." However, at my wage, my co-workers and I are not afforded the same quality of life that we are expected to provide. It is unsustainable and dangerous that we provide something we don't have ourselves.

I struggle every day staying positive, when I am constantly mulling how to pay my rent, feed myself, and keep up on my over \$80,000 in student loans – which keeps growing every month.

Almost two years ago, my 76-year-old father – who lives on the East Coast – had a heart attack, and I have only seen him once, because I don't have the money – or the time off – to visit him. How can I be expected to be a support network for our clients, when I don't have access to my own support networks?

What we make now is far below enough to live the life we were told was possible in the United States. We are not asking for much, just enough to survive. Just enough to support ourselves so we can continue to do our job and support others less fortunate than us.

Please vote to give my coworkers and I the much-needed raise we need. Thank you.