



KLAMATH COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SERVICES

Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Steiner Hayward, and Co-Chair Rayfield,

My name is Myles Maxey and I am the Director of Developmental Disabilities Services for Klamath County. I am writing today in support of increased investment in the I/DD case management budget.

Klamath County along with the other Community Developmental Disability Programs (CDDP's), which provide services to individuals and families of those experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in all 36 counties of Oregon, are represented by The Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP). CDDP's provide a variety of services, including case management for individuals experiencing I/DD, licensing of Adult Foster Homes, and overseeing abuse investigations.

At Klamath County Developmental Disabilities Services, along with all other CDDPs and AOCMHP, we believe that everyone deserves to feel safe, live with independence, and have choice and dignity of risk. Our core values center on advocacy, integrity, collaboration, and quality. Case managers are often a primary resource for individuals with I/DD, helping them set life goals, then helping to create the path to reach them. This could mean support finding employment, the right place to live, the right health care provider or support worker, or even a good, nearby hiking trail or other outdoor activity.

During crises, case managers are often a lifeline for individuals experiencing I/DD and their families. As the historic wildfires were unfolding this summer, case managers in impacted counties contacted countless families and individuals in their care, letting them know of the evacuation orders, and in some cases, helping them find shelter. Without the hard work of these case managers, we fear that some individuals with I/DD and their families would have never known to evacuate. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, case managers have been critical in assisting individuals with I/DD receive vaccinations, get tested, and adhere to life-saving public health protocols.

However, for case managers to be effective, they must have a reasonable caseload. Over the past four years, Oregon has underfunded this system. As a result, caseloads around the state have increased, putting those with I/DD at greater risk for bad outcomes.

Here in Klamath County, much like many areas of the state, we have seen unprecedented growth in the number of individuals experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities that we are supporting during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is both amazing as individuals and families get necessary and desired supports, it is also difficult as caseloads grow and begin to become unmanageable to support individuals. Currently the average caseload size in Klamath County is over 45 individuals on average per a case manager. Further, during the pandemic, case managers have been one of the few consistent aspects outside of their families. I regularly hear from

individuals that we support here in Klamath County and their families regarding their gratitude for the opportunities to connect and maintain a sense of normalcy.

As we begin our road to recovery from the pandemic, it is critical that we bolster and protect individuals with I/DD and their families.

I strongly urge you to fully fund the I/DD case management budget. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Myles Maxey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Myles Maxey

Director

Klamath County Developmental Disabilities Services

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