

Hello,

My name is John Barlow and I am a Direct Support Professional working with adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I work for Benco in Corvallis, Oregon.

I have seen a lot of DSP's come and go in the 7 years that I have worked for this company. As a non-profit company wages start a little higher than minimum wage and DSP'S often leave after a year or so due to higher wages being paid at jobs they can find elsewhere.

This is problematic for a few reasons; for the people we provide care for it is traumatic and painful emotionally as Direct Support Professionals are most often the only stable and consistent relationships they have in their lives. Starting over with someone new is uncomfortable and requires time to build trust.

For the DSP's left it means working overtime and filling in until someone new can be found. This often means working 50-60 hour weeks over extended amounts of time and leads to mental exhaustion and high burnout. When Direct Support Professionals are overworked they can't provide the best care for those they support.

Raising the wage would hopefully slow the high turnover rate and would open the door for a larger pool of potential employees so that companies may hire the best people for this highly skilled job and not just who is available.

Please stand with adults with ID/DD and Direct Support Professionals and show your support by passing HB 2964.