

Written Testimony

My name is Shara Alderman Director of Residential Operations of UHI Agency.

We are an agency that helps support 42 people that experience disabilities.

I am writing in support of HB 2457. It ensures that DSP's get the wages they deserve, by moving DSP wages to 150% of minimum wage and covering the Paid Leave Oregon Payroll Expense.

The workforce now is not the same as it was 10 or even 5 years ago. Ever since the pandemic people were forced to choose between their safety and the safety of their family and work. The people we support do not have a choice to choose between, their life is affected no matter what the staff choose to do.

While DSP wages start out at the same as Taco Bell, Taco Bell could shut down tomorrow and very little impact would occur certainly death could not occur if Taco's were not being made.

People that choose the career path of a DSP, have chosen this path for more reasons than money, they have chosen this path to help people live successful lives that experience constant difficulty and scrutiny.

People that we support, deserve the staff that can live a comfortable life and stay in the field that drives their compassion and empathy.

Direct Support Professionals should not have to choose between a job that sells tacos and a career that helps people with dire supports and much needed help, compassion, integration and empathy.

I vote YES on HB 2457.