

Submitter: David Van Hook

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2457

Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my strong support for increasing the wages of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) in the state of Oregon. These individuals play a crucial role in supporting individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), and their work is incredibly important.

I understand that there is a current push for a House bill that will provide DSPs with a higher wage, and I believe that this is a step in the right direction. The reality is that underfunding proper supports for individuals with IDD can have significant financial consequences for the state of Oregon. When DSPs are not adequately compensated for the important work they do, it can lead to high turnover rates and a shortage of trained professionals. This, in turn, can result in a reliance on crisis supports and services, which can be costly for emergency services and tax payers.

Furthermore, underfunding proper supports can also exacerbate the homeless crisis that is currently happening. Individuals with IDD are often at a higher risk of becoming homeless, and it is important to ensure that they have access to adequate and stable support. Providing DSPs with a higher wage will help ensure that they are able to provide consistent and effective support to those they serve, reducing the risk of homelessness and other crisis situations.

From a purely financial standpoint, it is cheaper for the state of Oregon to raise wages for DSPs than to deal with the consequences of not doing so. Providing DSPs with a fair wage for their work will not only benefit those they support, but it will also help ensure the long-term financial stability of the state.

I would like to share a personal story to emphasize the importance of increasing wages for DSPs. I have a close friend who works as a DSP and has dedicated her life to supporting individuals with IDD. Despite her passion for the work, she often struggles to make ends meet on her current wage. She loves her job, but the low pay has made it difficult for her to continue working in the field. I believe that by increasing the wages of DSPs like my friend, we can not only support the individuals they serve, but also ensure that dedicated professionals are able to continue doing this important work.

I urge you to support the push for a House bill that will provide DSPs with a higher wage. This is not only the right thing to do, but it is also the smart and financially responsible thing to do. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
David Van Hook