

Submitter: Rhonda Richardson
On Behalf Of: Albertina Kerr Centers
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services
Measure: HB2457

I am a long time RN working in the Group Home setting for Albertina Kerr Care Centers in the Troutdale & Gresham area.

-Since Covid, it has been difficult to recruit staff, LPN's, DSP's & Program Managers.

-We have long time Assistant Directors in Marion, Clackamas & Multnomah counties and only because of their tireless service as well as the service of long time nursing & DSP staff have we been able to survive during this difficult season. We have had staff be stuck in homes for extended hours on repeat occasions, because there was no staff available to relieve them. This can lead to staff "burn out" and only increases the burden of the workload long term.

-the State did get involved on more than one occasion to help us locate temporary staff to stabilize the Group Homes.

-Many of our nurses & DSP staff have been working overtime on a regular basis, to allow their co-workers to get vacation time.

-the company has been advertising & actively recruiting for new staff, with only minimal success.

-our Group Homes remain under staffed, causing worker fatigue. Thanks to the long time dedicated staff our residents remain safe.

-however, to be realistic, our workforce is aging, as staff retire, we are having a SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE trying to recruit qualified staff to replace them.

-It does matter that our staff are able to make a LIVING WAGE.

-an INCREASE in WAGE, WILL MAKE for a HOPEFUL ATMOSPHERE for the FUTURE of those we CARE for, our most vulnerable citizens.

-OREGON has long been known for its PIONEER SPIRIT, a CAN DO ATTITUDE and a PLACE that PROVIDES HOPE for a NEW FUTURE, we have been on the cutting edge of all kinds of innovation.

-OREGON can make a WAY POSSIBLE to CONTINUE to GIVE CARE to those requiring SIGNIFICANT SUPPORTS to LIVE their OPTIMAL LIFE.

-PLEASE choose to support our COMMUNITY, those with developmental and mental health challenges, they GIVE back in WAYS that go unnoticed by the general public.

-When you SAY YES to PAYING LIVING WAGES to the staff who SHOW UP to SERVE, you make a CHOICE to GIVE HOPE to OREGON!!!!