

2/7/2023

To whom it may concern,

My name is Pilar Taylor and I provide training and administrative support to the Residential Program at Partnerships in Community Living. Because of my role, I am in contact with our DSP's already working here, as well as all of our new hires. I have experience in the medical field as well as mental health, and have been caring for humans from all walks of life for over 27 years.

I am writing in support of HB 2457, urging you to give DSPs a fair and livable wage of 150% of the minimum wage and covering the Paid Leave Oregon Payroll Expense. This bill would ensure that our skilled workforce can continue to provide this specialized care without sacrificing a decent wage, as well as attract new caring individuals to begin a career in this field.

DSP wages increased after you agreed to fund the current rate model last session, and for this we are very grateful. It has helped us to survive the difficult economic circumstances. Thank you for seeing our value! I am asking that you once again see the value in retaining our current staff and easing our trouble in recruiting new staff to this amazing field of increasing the people we serve' independence.

The pandemic was incredibly hard on our workforce and we are currently running without the ideal number of staff and still providing the best support we can. The care our staff show and the skills they help develop in the people we serve is currently not reflected in the wages we are able to provide. This is a huge value not only to the people we support and their families but to the community as well. We all deserve to have a community that is accessed by people with all different levels of ability. Our community benefits hugely from this, instilling values of inclusion and increasing awareness that each person is made differently and is just as important as anyone else.

Current reimbursements for these services were built on cost studies that are now years old, so even though service rate models are fully funded, the costs built into these models are significantly behind the current market. I have attached a flier that highlights these key points and shows how DSP wages consistently trend above the reimbursement rate.

Please, support HB 2457 and vote yes to increase our DSPs wages and show that their work is valued. Show people with I/DD and their families that you support a skilled workforce to provide the services that they need.

Thank you for your time,

Pilar Taylor