

Submitter: Hulett Alyssa

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2457

My name is Alyssa Hulett, I am an Assistant Residential Manager for Shangri-La, which provides homes, support, and stability for people with disabilities.

I am writing in support of HB2457. This bill will ensure that DSPs are paid the wages they deserve, by moving DSP wages to 150% of minimum wage, and covering the Paid Leave Oregon Payroll Expense.

DSP wages rose significantly after you agreed to fund the current rate model last session. And we thank you for this investment.

Unfortunately, the pandemic and changing workforce has continued to erode our progress on wages. Even though providers consistently pay wages above the amount that is funded, they still struggle with hiring and retaining employees in this vital field.

The work we do is critical to our individuals and the entire community. We need your support now more than ever. I was a DSP for years before moving into my current position, and while I was a DSP I barely made enough to support myself and my family. I consistently relied on services such as SNAP (foodstamps) and ERDC (employment-related day care) in order to make ends meet. And it actually wasn't until I moved into my current position that I was able to "graduate" off of these programs. I love what I do, but supporting my family, while also supporting the people I serve was always a struggle.

Our DSPs care greatly for the individuals they serve. They learn their likes and dislikes, help our individuals participate their favorite activities, explore new hobbies, help them celebrate birthdays, and holidays, and are there for them day in and day out. But how can we ask our DSPs to work so hard and give so much heart and soul to their work, and the people they serve, if we can't give them the wages needed to thrive?

We need to do a better job supporting those who support our most vulnerable citizens.

Please vote YES on HB 2457. DSPs, the people they support, and their families are all counting on your support!

Alyssa Hulett,  
Assistant Residential Manager  
Shangri-La