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February 27, 2023

Dear Co-Chair Campos and Valderrama:

I am writing today in support of HB 5026, with the goal of ensuring that Direct Support Professionals get the wages they deserve. I support a fully funded I/DD budget.

As Chief Financial Officer for Sunrise Enterprises, I am privileged to help support 125 people with disabilities in Douglas County, Oregon. My co-workers go above and beyond daily to provide accessibility and choice to each individual regardless of ability as they model inclusive diversity to our entire community.

In 2021, the Legislature made historic investments in services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), and for the first time, the I/DD system was fully funded. Even though this investment allowed us to increase wages for DSPs by \$1.25 an hour (current average reimbursement wage for DSPs at \$17.81), we still struggle with staff shortages. We must continue to move the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce out of crisis. We must protect and enhance this investment in the future.

The pandemic and changing workforce have continued to erode our progress on wages. Even though providers consistently pay wages above the amount funded, we still struggle to hire and retain employees. Local fast-food organizations post higher starting wages than we can allocate to our valued staff.

Additional increases in wages are needed to address the current workforce shortage.

I specifically urge you to support:

- ODDS's POP 132 – Targeted Rate Increase estimated to cost \$162M
  - Includes wage inflation and rate increases that bring DSP wages in payment category 1 to \$19.36, payment category 2 to \$20.38, and to \$22.42 in payment category 4 in the first year of the biennium. Increases the health insurance assumption to \$628.45 (currently \$525) per employee per month and adds the 0.4% employer Paid Leave Oregon payroll tax pick-up.
- HB 2457 – 150% of Minimum Wage + 1% Paid Leave Oregon Pick-up estimated to cost \$116.9M
  - This bill will make further investments into DSP wages – because DSP work is not minimum wage work! HB 2457 statutorily sets DSP wages across the state at 150% of the metro minimum wage and includes the full 1% Paid Leave Oregon pick-up (.4% Employer + .6% Employee pick-up).

Please value the work and raise the wage! Direct Support Professionals, the people they support, and their families are counting on **your** support!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Maritz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "z".

Jane Maritz  
Chief Financial Officer