

Submitter: carolyn caldwell

On Behalf
Of: myself

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human
Services

Measure: HB5026

I am asking you to support this bill. I have worked in this field for 11 years and embarrassed regarding the rate of pay our DSPs receive. They do the work that many are afraid of. Not only do they do the work...they do it with compassion, humor and empathy. They are my eyes and ears and know our supported individuals better than anyone else at our agency. We nearly had to close our doors during the pandemic due, mostly, to staff shortages. It is still difficult to find employees. It is even more difficult to find good employees who are engaged and excited about providing high quality support. Turnover continues to be a big challenge as most people take a job and then wait for another provider to offer a higher wage. We have raised our wages significantly but the rate of service reimbursement is often less than what we pay our DSPs so my program is continuing to lose significant amounts of money.

Please consider that DSA services add structure and quality of life as well as learning skills. If supported individuals didn't have Day Services their quality of life would be negatively impacted. Without qualified employees we cannot provide quality services. Thank you so much considering the importance of this bill.

c. caldwell