



United Way  
of Columbia County

Dear Sen. Wlnsvey Campos, Co-Chair  
Rep. Andrea Valderrama, Co-Chair  
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

**Support for HB 5026 – DHS Budget and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities**

March 2, 2023  
Co-Chair Campos and Valderrama,

I write to offer my support for a **fully funded I/DD budget**. 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), local providers still struggle with staff shortages.

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

Please protect your investment and continue fully funding I/DD rates while prioritizing DSPs!

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).

United Way of Columbia County values the work of DSP and recognizes that livable wages are a keystone to building vibrant local economies, reducing family trauma, and ensure safe care for our most vulnerable community members.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Catt

United Way of Columbia County  
Executive Director