Submitter: Teresa Nickel-Zuniga

On Behalf
         Of:

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

Measure: HB5026

Sen. WInsvey 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), we still struggle with staff shortages. We must continue to move the Direct
Support
Professional (DSP) workforce out of crisis.
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).

Please value the work and raise the wage!
Respectfully submitted,
Teresa Nickel-Zuniga