

Dear Senator Winsver Campos and Co-Chair Representative Andrea Valderrama
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

In Support of HB 5026 - DHS Budget and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

In Support of HB 2457 - Value the work and raise the wage - Increase the minimum wage for DSPs to 150% of Oregon's Minimum Wage

As a current board member TVW, Inc., I am writing to you in support of the above House Bills. Being on the board of an organization that supports Oregon citizens with disabilities has offered me a unique insight into the struggles such organizations face in being able to fully serve this community. TVW, Inc. serves those people with mental illness, developmental disabilities and other disabilities, providing job and personal growth coaching and support. TVW's job coaches go above and beyond to make sure these individuals have specifically and individually designed opportunities to become the fully functioning and integrated members of our workforce, as well as being able to support themselves and achieve a higher quality of life. It is a difficult, but rewarding position. During the current workforce crisis, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit, hire and maintain those coaches. I have watched the executive staff at TVW struggle over the past three years to identify individuals who would be a great fit for this task only to lose them due to the low ceiling on wages. I know this is a very wide-spread issue, but an organization like TVW is standing up and advocating not only for themselves, but for those who very rarely have a voice of their own.

These dedicated employees deserve to earn a living wage and TVW, Inc. is determined to provide for them right along with the people they serve.

Historically, you have invested in this growing and precious segment of our communities and we are asking you to continue that vital support. By fully funding both HB 5026 and HB 2457, you will positively impact organizations like TVW across Oregon, allowing them to continue the important work they do for our citizens with disabilities.

Thank you for your attention to this most important issue. Your efforts are appreciated.

Sincerely,

Julie Ames
Board
TVW, Inc.