

Submitter: victoria kelly

On Behalf  
Of: Lifempowered

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 Sub committee 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 legislative made historic investments in services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities ( I/DD) and for the first time the I/DD was fully funded. Even though this investment allowed us to increase wages for DSP's by 1.25\$ hr (current average reimbursement wage for DSP's at 17.81.

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 DSP's!

I have worked in this field 13 years for Lifempowered in St.Helens, or and know personally how this affect the people we support and us ourselves. The fluctuation of staff and such completely affects each and every one of our people. It brings on behaviours or seizures or such when they don't have regular staff that knows their needs and how to handle them. Constant changes in staff is very stressful on them. They need continuous care and regular schedules to help them live their best lives. Doing this job is not an easy one and for the faint of heart, and those of us who do it, do it out of love and compassion. It is hard for us to make a living out of low wage and minimal insurance coverage and many of us can't and have had to take second jobs to support it or leave and get a higher paying job even though we would prefer not to leave. This constant rotation completely interrupts their lives and it takes it toll immensely. Please take the time to consider and listen to all of us doing this job, these people matter we support and we ourselves deserve a decent wage.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Victoria kelly (DSP)