

Date: April 6, 2023

To: Joint Subcommittee on Human Services

From: Valerie Thompson Multnomah County DCHS

RE: Support Full Funding for I/DD Case Managers

Co-Chair Campos, Co-Chair Valderrama and Member of the Committee,

My Name is Valerie Thompson and I represent Multnomah County DCHS.

Our clients thrive when they have adequate housing, jobs that they love and are supported by people who care about them living their best life. For those with Intellectual/Developmental Disability (I/DD), a case manager can often be the link to finding all of these important things.

I provide case management services who experience disability. I have colleagues in all 36 counties in Oregon. Some of the program for individuals who experience disability are run by county human service departments, and other are independent nonprofits that directly contract with the state or their local county to provide these services.

The CDDP appropriation is built into the ODHS budget. Over the course of the past few biennia, the Legislature has made some meaningful strides to fully fund this budget which has allowed us to provide more effective service to those in need. But, we have not reached full funding for our budget in several years. Sadly this has resulted in high turnover of case managers which in turn has caused case managers' caseloads to increase. This is not beneficial for our clients that depend on our services. I recently had to testify in a case for one of my kiddos in DHS custody. The opposing lawyer asked me about my experience with case management and how many children were on my caseload. I told her my caseload included 58 children. She then asked me how many hours per week do I work and I told her 40. She then said something I had never thought of before but has stayed with me since. She said well you don't have enough hours in your work week to give each child just 1 hour a week. At first that caught me off guard and after I was done testifying, I thought to myself, she is right! There is so much more we want and could do to assure our clients live their lives safely, thrive and become their best self, but we just have caseloads that are too high. If you all fully fund our budget, we could hire more case managers and have smaller caseloads and be able to go above and beyond for our clients like we want to.

In their Agency Request Budget (ARB, ODHS included a Policy Option Package to full fund these programs, recognizing the important role that CDDPs play in local communities. While this POP was not included in the Governor's Budget, full funding for these programs remains critical. Full funding will allow us to better serve those with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability (I/DD)

Please full fund this budget!

Sincerely,

Valerie Thompson

