

Submitter: Anastasia Godsey
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Co-Chairs Steiner, Sanchez and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Anastasia Godsey, and I work for the Oregon Department of Human Services in Salem. I am writing to you today to ask you to invest in the work that fellow state workers and I do. We risk our lives during pandemics and wildfires, provide lifelines to families in need, keep our roads safe, care for our most vulnerable, and so much more. Every Oregonian is affected by our work, and we care deeply about the services we provide for the people of Oregon and take pride in our work. We Make Oregon Work.

For the past 18 years I have worked in various represented positions providing direct customer service to elderly and people with disabilities. As an Adult Protective Service Specialist, I had to enter facilities with active COVID cases to conduct investigations of abuse and neglect. As a Human Services Case Manager, I had to go into unsanitary and dangerous environments to do annual assessments.

The workforce crisis that was exacerbated by pandemic lead to multiple vacancies and unbearable workloads. Continued challenges with technology make it even harder. Some of my coworkers are unable to take their breaks and lunches, have to work mandatory overtime, and still feel like they are always falling behind. Burnout and turnover are real. Every agency in our state is facing these challenges like never before.

No one who is working full time should live in poverty. Far too many state workers are eligible for state services like Medicaid, food stamps and subsidized childcare, and many are homeless or on the verge of losing their homes. Some have to juggle multiple jobs in addition to their full-time state job to make ends meet.

We are asking the Legislature:

- To fund a major investment in state workers so we can begin addressing the workforce crisis;
- Avoid cuts to programs and ensure that Agencies have the resources they need to deliver valuable services to Oregonians across the state.
- To support the Governor's strategic decision to use all available current resources to invest in key priorities.

Oregon's reserves are already healthy and strong. Rather than saving more for a

future Rainy Day, we need to make investments NOW. Tomorrow may be too late.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony today.