

Submitter: Rebekah Anglin-Martin
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

My name is Rebekah A. Martin and I am an In-Home Services Coordinator for RISE Services here in Roseburg. RISE provides services to individuals within our community who have Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). The youngest individual on our caseload here in Roseburg, is 2 years of age, and the eldest individual is in their mid 70s. We currently employ just under 60 Direct Support Professionals (DSP) in Douglas county. This field is my passion, not just professionally, but personally as well, as my sibling also has an IDD.

My family has been impacted by DSP support provided for my brother over the years as we have watched him become a valuable contributor to society as a result of the support he receives. To watch my brother grow from this quiet, shut in person, to someone who gained employment, friends, and hobbies has truly been amazing. It didn't happen overnight. This change took months of hard work; hard work that had its setbacks when one of his DSPs didn't stick around. And they didn't leave because they didn't enjoy working with my brother, but rather because they had difficulty in supporting themselves, or their families based on their wages. The turnover impacted his progress and his confidence. Something I see frequently as our very own DSPs at RISE, leave for the same reason.

I am speaking to you today to ask that you include POP 132 into the budget, which provides funding to increase DSP wages. Without valuing the work and raising the wage, I am concerned about the workforce levels being sustainable, and those amazing and vulnerable members of our community losing the care they depend on.

At RISE, our mission is to Create Opportunities For and With People, and that is exactly what our DSPs do day in and day out, rain or shine, 365 days a year. We help create opportunities for the wide variety of individuals we support. Some need behavior and hygiene support, some assistance to keep them safe while out in the community, and those who would have no one else in their life to check in on them as they do not have family. There are many individuals we serve who without our DSPs being there, sadly would have no one.

If this bill was passed it would mean that my brother would continue to have the much needed care and that all of the other individuals who reside in Douglas county would have opportunities to have stable, consistent, and reliable DSPs. Please value the work and value by raising the wage and investing in this amazing population in my community.

