

Submitter: Karen Brown
On Behalf Of: Karen Brown
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

On Behalf of DSP's
Joint Committee On Ways and Means
SB5506

To All Members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means,

My name is Karen Brown, and I have been a Direct Support Professional with Living Opportunities for 20 years this fall. I came into this profession expecting it to be like every other job I'd had up to that point, and to my surprise I couldn't have been more wrong. Every day I get to touch people's lives and try to make a positive difference. I'm there when they have successes, and when they have setbacks. I feel anger and sadness on their behalf whenever it seems that the scales are tipped against them. I help the individuals I serve to advocate for themselves, and I step in and advocate for them when needed. Now I am advocating for myself and my fellow DSP's. I have seen firsthand how difficult it is for the people I serve when staff member they rely on and trust have to leave, and I have experienced some of the strain of a company being unable to hire or retain quality employees because of it is unable to compete financially or keep up with rising costs of living. I have also experienced my own financial difficulties, and have done my best to not allow that strain to show in my work. I am asking that as you all are deliberating on SB 5506 and POP132 , that you consider all aspects of how your decision could help or harm those most in need in our communities. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I sincerely hope you will support this issue.