

My name is Cristal DeJarnac, and I am a homecare worker and personal support worker from Bend. I am also a chief steward in my union.

Unfortunately, I lost my client last year due to complications from surgery. I am currently working part-time with a new client.

As chief steward in my union, I attend weekly grievance meetings with the Oregon Homecare Commission. It is there where we help solve our workers' issues. Whether that be pay problems, health and safety issues, grievances, case manager issues, provider time capture, or overall system issues – we cover it all.

We currently have eight active grievances and 29 pay cases that needed union intervention after not getting their issue addressed or they disagreed with the outcome of their case. There are currently 429 active pay cases with the OHCC that are waiting to be resolved and more are added each week. There have been almost 1,800 pay issues reported since the implementation of a new process for reporting pay problems last August. The new process was implemented, in part, after a group grievance over late pay in 2021 and 2022 that resulted in over \$1 million in payments to workers.

It is both very frustrating and heartbreaking hearing about what care providers are going through. Many are on the verge of losing their homes, struggling to pay their bills and to put food on the table. It is frustrating hearing the State quibble over paying late pay penalties when people's livelihoods are literally on the line. It always comes back to the antiquated systems that ODHS has.

House Bill 4129 would be a God send for so many workers. They will be able to continue to work for their consumers and clients, and not deal with the headaches of late pay and systems issues.

We need to support this workforce. The Silver Tsunami is a real thing and it's coming quickly. If we don't figure out a way to build and retain our workforce, too many consumers are going to be the ones who will suffer in the end. Do we really want that to be Oregon's legacy?

Thank you,

Cristal DeJarnac

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