

To: Sen Gelser-Blouin, Chair, Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Sarah Price

Re: Support for SB 725, capping caseloads for IDD case management at 1:30

Chair Sen. Gelser-Blouin and committee members,

My name is Sarah Price. I live in Portland, Oregon, and work as a Personal Agent (PA) at Community Pathways, Inc., a support service brokerage that serves adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) living in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.

**I am writing to express my support of SB 725 to establish a minimum staffing ratio of 30 to 1 for service coordinators and personal agents serving individuals with IDD.**

As a PA who serves adults with IDD, I can attest to the challenge of providing quality care and services to more than 40 individuals on one caseload. Capping caseloads at 30 customers will allow service coordinators and personal agents like myself more time to get to know the people we serve and focus on helping them plan and access the supports and services they need and want to live in the community. By reducing workloads, this cap on caseloads would also reduce the risks of burnout and staff turnover that can negatively impact service delivery and outcomes for individuals receiving services.

Throughout the six years I have worked as a PA, I have personally witnessed several compassionate and highly skilled PAs become overworked and leave the position within two years, due to the intense mental health strain of trying to support so many people in a meaningful way. Such departures are a hardship for all members of the team, from the customers and families who most directly feel the loss, to the PAs who cover until a new PA is hired, which can take months. A solid team is crucial to our customers getting the individualized care they deserve, and at times, desperately need. Lowering caseloads to a more manageable number would make this job more sustainable, and would retain more long term, quality support for our customers.

Passing SB 725 is critical to ensuring Oregonians with IDD receive the support services they need—when they need them—to live healthy, safe, and active lives in the community.

As a resident of Oregon, I also want to see SB 725 pass because it supports our community members with IDD and all of the people, including family members, who provide individuals with direct support on a daily basis.

I strongly recommend you pass SB 725.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sarah Price

Personal Agent, Community Pathways, Inc.