

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

My name is **Kari Seals**, and I am a **Service Enhancement Specialist** at **Clatsop Behavioral Health**, where I work to improve and expand services for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in our community. A core function of my role—and of the broader I/DD system—is to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the case management support they need to live safely, access essential resources, and participate fully in their communities.

Case management is not just a service—it is a lifeline. Case managers connect individuals to critical supports like housing, healthcare, employment, and transportation. In emergencies, case managers play an essential role in ensuring the safety of those who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

Beyond my professional experience, I also have a deeply personal understanding of the impact of these services—I am the parent of a child with a disability. My daughter's case manager has been instrumental in helping our family navigate a complex system of supports. Thanks to her case manager, we've been able to access **Professional Behavior Services** to ensure her safety, secure the school-based accommodations she needs to thrive, and connect with a **Direct Support Professional (DSP)** who assists with her daily living needs. These are life-changing supports that families like mine depend on, and they would not be possible without a well-funded case management system.

Despite the critical role that case managers play, funding for these services has remained stagnant. Our programs have consistently received only **86% of what is needed for full funding**. Despite serving a similar number of individuals, APD has enjoyed higher appropriations in recent years. This funding gap for the I/DD system has real consequences—high turnover, excessive caseloads, and a workforce that is stretched too thin to provide the level of service that individuals and families need.

The case management role is highly complex, requiring **in-depth knowledge of Medicaid, state and federal regulations, housing resources, employment services, and crisis response**. It takes years to build the expertise necessary to provide effective service coordination, yet chronic underfunding leads to rapid turnover, forcing individuals and families to repeatedly start over with new case managers who are still learning the system.

This session, we are **partnering with the Support Service Brokerages to advocate for full funding**. Restoring funding to **100%** will allow us to build a more stable, experienced workforce that can provide the high-quality services that individuals with disabilities deserve.

We urge you to support this request. This investment is essential to maintaining the integrity of Oregon's I/DD service system and ensuring that the individuals we serve can live safe, full, and independent lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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