

Submitter: Concerned DSP  
On Behalf Of: All DSP's and Homecare Workers  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3838

Dear Sponsors of HB 3838 and Members of the Committee,

I urge you to pass HB 3838 to establish strong workforce standards for Oregon's Home and Community-Based Services sector. As an Oregon resident and Direct Support Professional (DSP) with 15 years of experience, I can personally attest that the issues this bill seeks to address are not theoretical; they are urgent and real. I speak from personal experience, as I am currently living the realities this bill seeks to remedy.

While I am concerned that improvements may take too long to implement, I understand that this task force is a necessary first step toward securing the data needed to mandate long-overdue changes. This process has already been proven successful in other states like Colorado, Minnesota, and Nevada. Delay has already come at the cost of worker well-being, resident care quality, and public trust. These agencies are weaponizing our hearts and empathy against us, as we care deeply about the ones we support. Many of us do not want to leave them for other work but are being forced to in order to support ourselves and our families. The situation has become unsustainable for many long-term caregivers. This in turn affects the residents, who are equally attached to their staff.

The opposition to HB 3838 largely comes from agency executives, not from those of us on the front lines. Without legally binding standards, many providers will continue to prioritize executive salaries over fair wages and safe staffing for DSPs. Frontline staff wages have stagnated in the Portland metro area, and a DSP's monthly wages often barely cover a single month's rent. I and my fellow DSPs have not received a raise since the last Medicaid adjustment over three years ago and have been told we will not get one until the reimbursement rate is increased. Meanwhile, my agency's CEO now earns nearly \$500,000 a year (ProPublica, 2023); that is over 100 times the salary of an average DSP. Frontline staff are falling into poverty while upper management thrives. Medicaid funds, in my opinion, should not encourage such behavior.

Worse, agencies are routinely violating safe staffing ratios, forcing one worker to do the work of two. This not only endangers the safety and dignity of residents but also puts workers at extreme physical and emotional risk. Staff shortages are severe, and DSPs often work 16–18 hour shifts without relief, while management refuses to assist. The executive's refusal to invest in wages and safe working conditions is directly harming both the workforce and the vulnerable individuals we serve.

Higher standards are not optional. They are necessary and demand urgent attention. The people who provide this essential care, and those who rely on it, deserve better.

For these reasons, I strongly support HB 3838 and urge you to advance it without delay.

I am withholding my name due to fear of retaliation but welcome follow-up via email.

Thank you for your consideration.