



**Written Testimony of Cheryl Cisneros
Executive Director, Creating Opportunities**

Submitted in Opposition SB 1505

My name is **Cheryl Cisneros**, Executive Director of **Creating Opportunities**, a Regional Family Network supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities in Marion, Polk & Yamhill Counties. I have spent decades working alongside families, DSPs, and community partners to strengthen Oregon's I/DD system. I am also the **parent of an autistic adult who receives DSP Services in our family home**.

I fully support fair wages, high-quality training, and professional growth for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs); however, **SB 1505 does not move us toward those goals**. Instead, it creates a costly, duplicative bureaucracy at a time when ODHS is already facing budget cuts.

SB 1505 would delay solutions for years. The proposed Workforce Standards Board would not result in any wage changes until **at least 2029**, requiring a new labor market study, a full rulemaking process, and CMS approval before anything takes effect. This workforce and the families they support cannot wait five years for a process that spends funds unnecessarily.

Oregon already has the data it needs. The **2025 APD-ODDS Rate & Wage Study** clearly states that Oregon must invest **\$800 million in General Fund dollars** to bring DSP wages to **\$23.20/hour** and close the existing wage gap. SB 1505 does not implement these recommendations—it adds **process without pay**.

The fiscal impact is also significant. According to the Legislative Fiscal Office's review of last session's HB 3838, the Board would cost taxpayers **over \$11.5 million from 2025-2029**. These dollars should go **directly to DSP wages**, not to new administrative structures – especially now!

Our system already has extensive oversight through ODDS, DHS, OHA, OSHA, BOLI, and others. DSPs work in highly individualized environments, often in family homes. Imposing workplace standards through a centralized board diminishes the voice of families, providers and advocates.

Please reject SB 1505 and fund the recommendations from the 2025 Rate & Wage Study and ensure those dollars reach DSPs quickly. Oregon does not need a new board to tell us what we already know, our DSP workforce deserves **better pay now**, not in five years.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregonians with I/DD and their families.

With Gratitude – Cheryl Cisneros