

Submitter: Marci Kallinger  
On Behalf Of: The IDD Community  
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1505  
SB 1505 Opposition Testimony  
2-4-26

Good Morning Chair Jama and Members of the Committee,  
My name is Marci Kallinger and I am the Executive Director for the Ron Wilson Center, a non-profit in Monmouth, serving around 55 people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Polk County. We employ about 110 DSP's.

SB 1505 isn't about increasing wages for our direct workforce. It offers a bureaucratic process to tell you as a legislator what wages should be. You already have this information because legislators asked for a study to be completed and the report was published last year. The study reflects the investments that need to be made to get our DSP wages increased to a living wage of \$23.20 an hour. I am asking you today to review this study and use funds available to start closing this wage gap and not put funds towards the creation of an unnecessary board.

What is even more frightening is that SB 1505 grants this unelected board, not the legislature, authority over employment practices in our IDD settings, along with creating regulations that are enforceable through lawsuits. Some of these regulations include but are not limited to criteria for mandated health insurance and other benefits, predictive scheduling, paid time off and unpaid leave rules, disciplinary practices, wanting employee registries, and enforcing what SEIU defines as good training.

Currently, RWC puts legislative increases meant for DSP wages towards wages and benefits. Our average wage of \$19.96 per hour and the rich benefits package where our employees do not pay a premium exists because I have the authority now to manage how to control costs. We have implemented robust training programs that at the core consists of providing individualized supports to the people receiving our services. RWC is unique and is able to function even with being underfunded because of this flexibility. This bill would instead allow an 11 person board to tell us how to best reward and compensate our staff. This bill is disguised to make people believe that this bureaucratic board is what is best for DSP's and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. That is not SEIU's priority. Their priority is to continue to increase their membership which should only be done through grassroots efforts and not legislation! Please Vote NO on SB 1505 and invest in our IDD community by investing in wages for DSP's!

Sincerely,  
Marci Kallinger  
Executive Director  
Ron Wilson Center