

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