

Submitter: Luke Penner
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1505

Good afternoon to the members of the Senate Committee on Rules, My name is Luke Penner, and I work daily to support DSPs and clients with RISE services. I am concerned with the decision to establish an unelected board that will make decisions impacting businesses and individuals with disabilities. This field is already heavily regulated, and the challenges faced by this field are primarily due to a lack of funding rather than a lack of regulation. The creation of this board will create a greater fiscal burden on the already limited funding this field receives. Additionally, it calls for this board to do a fiscal impact analysis for any changes, and rules will not be put into place until the required funds have been appropriated by the legislature. There has already been an analysis in 2023 and 2024 that shows that this field is underfunded by roughly 30%. What this field truly needs is for action to be taken based on that report, rather than the creation of a board that creates another layer of red tape between demonstrated need and action by the Oregon legislature.

I am concerned that the creation of this board will negatively impact many individuals with disabilities as well as the agencies that support them, especially agencies that operate in rural areas. In rural areas that already struggle to provide access to services for individuals with disabilities, agencies that support individuals in these areas will likely find the increased regulatory requirements cost-prohibitive. Lack of funding already impacts certain services to the point where many agencies are unable to offer that kind of support. For example, many agencies are unable to offer respite care to families, since these agencies typically pay DSPs between \$18 and \$25 per hour, which would be between \$180 and \$250 for a 10 hour respite shift. The expenditure for a provider agency is 232.25 per day, which would ultimately mean that for an agency to provide this service, they would be losing money unless they underpay the DSP who is performing the work. Ultimately, I believe the challenges this field faces are primarily due to a lack of funding rather than a lack of legislation, and I fear this bill may be just a way to "kick the can" down the road when it comes to adequately funding services for individuals with disabilities.

Sincerely,
Luke Penner