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Today I am writing a testimony to advocate for a livable wage as a DSP living in Maine. I have worked for Support Solutions for a bit over a year now and have learned a lot. It shocks me that this job pays as little as it does considering the level of support and essential services we provide. As far as I'm concerned you have to be a really good person and/or be in need of an entry level job to work here. If you fall under the good person category, this job is fantastic at points however, can be insanely draining (most of the time) with not a lot of room for raises, meaning no external motivation to want to do better. I've seen numerous people work the job for short periods of time, deciding to leave when they realize there is no room for growth and that the pay doesn't come close to matching the effort needed to be a good DSP. The reason I bring this up is to draw attention to the environment the low wage creates. It feels as though many staff come and go frequently, which yes, is normal, however, at the rate people leave it can be alarming and unstable for the clients as well as staff. For some people it creates space for slacking off while working, as there is no incentive motivating staff other than wanting to help clients, who at times don't want our guidance. I would love to see fair compensation that reflects the level of work my co workers and I tirelessly dedicate to this job. Increasing wages will provide an incentive to stay at the job, knowing you are doing good work and receiving a wage that matches the effort put in. In my opinion, nothing adds to work exhaustion like knowing you won't be compensated fairly for your efforts. I'm not trying to be harsh, I just want to illustrate many of our realities as I would love to continue this job but worry about what my future will look like.