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I strongly encourage you to support this bill because it is becoming increasingly difficult to stay in this field with the cost of living escalating. I have been a DSP for over 20 years, and although I am not involved for the money, I cannot afford to stay in this field much longer.

The low wage is discouraging others from entering the field, due to the high demands and low wages. Thereby, causing a staffing shortage which can affect a client's care and safety. The high turnover rate is also caused by low wages, which also affects the clients who need to develop a trusting relationship with staff.

DSPs provide critical assistance to those in need. Many with disabilities would not survive without support. DSPs also assist the elderly, the highest population group in our state. If we can encourage and sustain staffing, with a living wage, it will be beneficial to many, not just the DSP staff.

Low wages for amount of work we perform does not show any value towards our profession.