

To Whom this May Concern:

Re: shortage of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) serving Ohioans with developmental disabilities.

My brother is an adult with developmental disabilities in Northeast Ohio and requires DSPs to live. However, the low wages for DSPs have rendered the retention of workforce, talent, and skill impossible. While I understand the need to "do less with more," the table below demonstrates how "less" led to flagrant waste of dollars regarding the care of my adult brother. Precisely **\$69,249 could have been saved**. A fraction of the funding spent could have been utilized to supply my brother and his peers with staffing support. Conversely, due to a lack of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), the only option for my brother to receive supports was via an emergency congregate-living program. He unfortunately received indescribable treatment until we removed him after 36.6 days. The table outlines the **actual** funding for services that he required as a direct result of a lack of DSPs.

	10/30-11/17	11/17-12/24	Total
Duration of Medical Inpatient Stay (Avoidable with DSP staffing) + Emergency Respite Home: 36.6 days	Hospital Inpatient Medical Bills \$51,944	Emergency Placement Home Bill \$24,105	<i>actual total</i> <u>\$76,049</u>
<i>Had access to DSPs been available with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• rate of \$20/hr full time• same calendar length of time• (requiring M-F services; excluding holidays)	2,240	\$3,840	<u>\$6,800</u>
Difference: \$69,249			

Had my brother been able to maintain DSP supports, he would not have lost access to his ability to attend medical appointments, his vocational programs, and his social events. DSPs need higher wages to be able to support their own families; we are advocating for \$20 an hour. If DSP supports had been available (at a rate of \$20/hr) \$69,249 could have been saved. This situation is unfortunately not unique to our family nor to only Northeast Ohio.

Increasing wages to retain DSPs holds paramount both fiscal and ethical considerations.

My brother and I have never had the privilege of a "typical" brother-sister relationship; but this does not mean we are not close. The DSP crisis has resulted in the loss of us to have a meaningful family relationship; one that we have enjoyed since childhood. The sibling relationship is statistically most likely to be the longest relationship across the lifespan. **Please help me save ours.**

With the deepest appreciation of your time,
Lauren Hagenbuch

