

Carol Akers  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

My name is Carol Akers, the mother and sole care provider of Dustin, my 38 yr old son. My son requires 24/7 care due to a Traumatic Brain Injury as an infant. In the past, we have worked with several agencies who just couldn't keep staff, reliable, caring staff. It was stressful day to day, unsure if someone would be there, if I would have to leave work. It was always the same reason. They couldn't live on what they were paid. The last one left us for Amazon. He was apologetic, but said he had to go where he had better pay and benefits. I love my son, but it would be nice just to have a break. However, I see that as an Independent Provider, I cannot even have someone come in for 2 or 3 hours every now and then without giving up my entire day of paid care. So again I am on my own.

Only State officials actions can help us. We want to keep our individuals home, out of nursing homes and facilities, but are being penalized for caring for them. Please help resolve these issues that hinder our loved ones and protect their health, safety and well being. Please support people with Developmental Disabilities with this historic investment. This will allow providers to recruit, hire and retain quality Direct service professionals. Raising wages will encourage quality people to be a part of the much needed care system. Maybe I will find relief.

Thank you

Carol and Dustin Akers