

Catherine Brooks  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

I am lucky enough to support individuals with IDD as a residential waiver HPC provider. I have worked in this field for about 30 years and started my own company in 2014. For the first several years we grew very quickly. We have always struggled to hire people, but we managed. Starting in 2020 we were unable to hire. At all. We did not hire a single person for over 6 months. We have slowly had some DSP move on, but are not able to replace them. Over the past 3 years I have had to tell parents that we can no longer provide supports to their child. I have had to tell people that we will no longer be able to support them. I try so hard to reassure them that this isn't their fault. There is nothing they did wrong. Every time I have to do this involves tears. Mine, parents and the people we support. These are people we care about. How do I choose who is next? How do I decide whose life is going to change? I don't want to have one of those conversations ever again. We need help.