

Salena Williams  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce

I came into the MRDD field very young, around 19 years old. I never in my life thought that this job would save my life and hinder it also. Over the last nine years I have put all of my blood sweat and tears into my job. People always look down on people who work in the special-needs field, even though we change lives every day. I am so thankful to have a job but when I was 22 both of my parents were diagnosed with two different types of cancer. I went from living a regular life and going to school , to taking care of a mortgage , my parents and still trying to work full-time. During this time my mental , physical and emotional were tested. Currently most DSPs do not make enough money to live comfortably and one life setback will put us in a bad spot for the rest of our lives. We sacrifice a lot every day to help the special need community, and every day we sacrifice due to not having enough income to live comfortably at home. Not only do DSPs not get enough money, most companies do not pay enough to have on coming staff. So we are working under staff and underpaid.