

Sharon Traylinek
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

My name is Sharon and I am the Guardian of my brother, John. Disabled since birth, John is 56 years old, non-verbal and deaf. He does have limited knowledge of sign language enabling him to communicate simple requests. John also battles episodes of aggressive behavior. This is what forced my parents to place John in a group home over 35 years ago. While his personality is that of a cuddly teddy bear, his mood disorder can be very challenging to keep under control. My parents are now deceased and while my three sisters and myself see John through weekly visits and FaceTime calls, it is nothing compared to the care and devotion he is getting from the Direct Support Personnel at his group home. Due to John's aggressiveness, we are unable to bring him around our families. I honestly can't imagine John's quality of life or my family's with the Direct Support Personnel he relies on every day. These caregivers ensure us of John's safety and create a sense of stability and quality of life for John. These caregivers do for him what we are unable to do. In addition, they are also adding to my family's quality of life. More importantly, they are a necessity to John and so many others to accomplish the smallest of tasks to get through each day.

I am asking the powers that be to realize how important the Direct Support Personnel individuals are to so many, and to know they too, need to feel appreciated. You may not be able to put a price tag on what the RSP do for so many but I know without a doubt that right now, that price tag is way too low and something needs to change.

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