

Diona Edwards  
Testimony on HB 33  
Supporting the DD Workforce  
3/22/23

I've worked as a DSP for the last 11 yrs. It's been extremely hard lately especially financially. I've faced eviction in the last 2 years, gotten a car repossessed. I have lupus, pulmonary hypertension. Endometriosis and ulcerative colitis. I have several more health issues but each and every day I go to work and try to help individuals that have developmental delays & some of if not the same or more of the illnesses I have. & sometimes it's hard to support yourself with the pay when you have to pick medication over certain things you can/can't afford. We as DSP in this field sometimes turn into everything/family for some individuals. We spend almost every day with some and build amazing bonds. We love on them and nurture them and help them grow. It's just really hard to help when you need help yourself. This field is so under paid & it's hard work. It's very rewarding as well. I really do believe that anyone in this field definitely deserves higher pay. We need to be supported so that we can provide the best support for any individual. Everyone needs the necessary tools to succeed.