



*from the*

## **OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANNA SCHARF**

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### **SCHARF STANDS UP FOR COMMUNITY PROVIDERS**

**SALEM, OR** – On Tuesday, the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services unanimously passed [HB 2150A](#), which now heads to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means for approval.

This is a simple bill that would ensure the Department of Human Services (ODHS) annually adjusts payments to provider agencies serving individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD). Basically, HB 2150A ensures rates and wages are tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

In 2023, the Legislature directed ODHS to conduct a comprehensive rate and wage study across home and community-based services. The recommendations from that study indicate the home and community-based service delivery systems, including group homes, foster homes and residential care facilities are underfunded to the tune of \$558M necessary to stabilize this workforce.

“It is evident from the study that our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are not adequately paid. These are not minimum wage jobs, and yet they are dangerously close to making minimum wage,” said Scharf. “In the past five years, I/DD service providers have seen less than 3% increases in rates, while inflation has been at an all-time high.”

Due to the Governor’s Recommended Budget (GRB) being released prior to the ODHS study being complete, HB 2150A is needed to address the funding conversation.

Coincidentally, the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards passed [HB 3838](#) out of committee with a party-line vote today. The bill now goes to the House Committee on Rules for further consideration. That bill is an attack on our community providers as the legislation would create a Home and Community-Based Service Workforce Standards Board.

Fundamentally, this bill creates a new, highly empowered regulatory body that is given similar powers to a State agency. It’s unlike anything else in State government and would be unique nationally. The unelected board of special interest groups will have the power to subpoena, depose, sue employers through private rights of action, and set rules and standards that employers may not be able to meet.

“Mark my words, HB 3838 if passed will have unintended consequences. This poorly written policy will hurt our community providers and not provide a single dollar increase to wages while HB 2150A if funded could finally provide support for our DSPs. The irony that these bills passed in the same week is not lost on me,” said Scharf.

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