

May 21, 2024

## **Don't Delay - fully implement the Development Disabilities Rate Models on July 1, 2024**

*Dear Governor, Legislative Leaders and Staff,*

*My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a proud Californian.*

*I am writing to you today urging you to reject the Governor's proposal to delay the final implementation of the Rate Study for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities system. Delaying the full rate implementation – while simultaneously raising wages for the fast food industry – will further **destabilize critical services** for nearly half a million tax paying Californians and their families.*

People with I/DD rely on the services provided by their Direct Support Professionals (DSP) to maintain health, engage in the community, have jobs, and live the lives they are promised by California's Lanterman Act. The work these professionals do is skilled and nuanced, requiring them to make complex decisions with, at times, very little supervision. At the same time, the wages paid for this important and complicated work are severely low, sometimes only minimum wage, due to the current reimbursement rates paid by the State of California. Many DSPs work multiple jobs due to these poverty level wages, and California needs to do better! This chronic and long standing underpayment to Direct Support Professionals, causes great harm to people with disabilities through inability to meet staffing ratios and high turnover.

I have experienced detrimental effects of these low wages in the following ways:

*If California is for all what is the message Californians' with disabilities and those who provide support to them receive when the budget is balanced on their backs year after year.*

*I strongly urge the Legislature to reject the Governor's proposed delay and to fully implement the rate models on July 1, 2024, as previously agreed by the Legislature and the Governor.*

*Sincerely,*

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