

House Appropriations, HR Section
House Bill 1012
Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Chairman Nelson and members of the committee,

My name is Kay Metcalf and I have worked for the Open Door Center in Valley City, ND since 1988 in many different capacities. Open Door Center currently serves 90 individuals with disabilities. I am writing in support of HB 1012.

Open Door Center has struggled with retaining staff due to higher wages being offered at less stressful and easier to obtain positions with fast food restaurants and the like. Starting wages for a Direct Support Professional (DSP) is lower than what our McDonalds is offering. We are required to take learning modules that most jobs don't require. I am manager of Thunderbird Ranch Gourmet Foods and Dakota Seasonings, two small dry ingredient food companies that is run by Open Door Center. These two small companies give our folks meaningful employment. But when we can't keep job coaches and DSP's because of the wages, it makes it difficult to keep staff to be able to assist our individuals in our kitchen and production settings.

I urge you to support HB 1012, including the 4% and 3% reimbursement rate increases to the Division of Developmental Disabilities. We need your help if we are to maintain services for our individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Kay Metcalf

Manager

Open Door Center dba/ Thunderbird Ranch Gourmet Foods / Dakota Seasonings

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