



Enriching lives through employment and community connections

January 31, 2023

RE: Best Life Alliance legislation

Dear Chair Noor and Members of the Human Service Finance Committee:

I am writing in support of the Best Life Alliance legislation which makes long term sustainable investments in the DWRS, and which is being heard this Thursday, February 2, in the House Human Service Finance Committee. TSE, Inc. is a day program providing employment and enrichment supports for over 300 adults with developmental disabilities.

TSE and many other providers increased starting pay without funding increases to support them. TSE is not alone in authorizing a budget deficit for 2023 due to this. If nothing changes, TSE is predicting a \$300,000 loss for 2023.

TSE has been unable to reopen services to full days. We chose to reopen with AM and PM shifts in order to provide supports to as many people as possible. However, this continues to hinder job search and supports. In order to bring everyone back to full day supports, and to eliminate our waiting list, TSE would need to hire 30 direct support professionals. This is a daunting task.

Even with the pay increases, we continue to struggle recruiting. While the number of applicants has increased, there is still the lack of response from at least 80% of all applicants. Of the 20% who respond and schedule interviews, 85% of them do not show up for interviews. Also, accepting a job is no guarantee they will show up to their first day. A few weeks ago, our new staff worked 4 hours, left and never came back. Recruiting takes a lot of time, energy and resources, and this is highly discouraging.

We are often knocking on legislators' doors, and although many say they hear us and support us, we have yet to see action on increased funding for our services. These services need ongoing support from legislators. Disability services are expensive, but provide such value to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are required by CMS to provide person centered supports and services, and without staff, this is impossible to do. A step in the right direction is to pass the Best Life Alliance bill. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Suzette Frith'.

Suzette Frith, SHRM-CP, PHR
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