

I am fully in support of SB918 .

I have been working for a non-profit agency who supports adults in 11 CLA and 3 SLA arrangements for over 15 years. I have been a manager at a CLA for the last 13 years.

Many of the people we are asked to support in our agency have various behavior issues that require 1:1 or enhanced staffing. Our funding continues to be cut by tens of thousand dollars. Using LON as a funding tool is not working!!

Good hardworking people of this state have been without wage increases for over ten years. I am not alone in asking why this has been fine with the state. We are asked to cut back, cut back. We work with a fragile and needy part of our society and are asked to "live the Mission" which basically means do more and more with less and less. Tightening the belt feels like a noose, as we flounder to meet the needs of our people.

I have seen such an increase with our aging population, all of whom need extra help. Sending them to convalescent homes is not the answer!! These places are for older people who have no tolerance for people with behaviors who are loud and potentially dangerous. The administrators are trying to accommodate but they are fighting a losing battle. These places are being cited for neglect because they are not equipped to deal with our population and their staff did not sign up for restraints and constant vigilance, which the state seems to expect. When our people go into the hospital we are told the state will not pay for staff because they are under the hospitals care. This is unacceptable!! Our support is still very much needed for these individuals.

DDS is a broken department and needs to be fixed!!

Most Sincerely,

*Cathie Garofalo*

*Residential Manager*