PROPOSAL BRIEF

Proposal Title:	DSP State Minimum Wage
Proposal Sponsor:	Renee Wood, Nathan Turner
Date Proposed:	02-01-22
Implementation Timeframe	

Problem or Opportunity Statement

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) hold critical positions within the provider infrastructure supporting individuals with developmental disabilities but can legally be paid State of Ohio minimum wage.

The Proposal

The State of Ohio should establish a state minimum wage threshold for direct support professionals (DSPs). Similar minimum wage levels have been established in Colorado ($12.41), Minnesota ($15.25 in 2022), and potentially others. A New York proposal would set its wage at 150% of the minimum wage and set regional Medicaid rates to providers (S5374A) – currently in Senate Health Committee.

Pros	Cons
• A threshold creates a floor for wages which says this profession is critical and valued. • The state establishes wage floors for other professions, i.e. teachers, so this is not a precedent. • Agency providers will increase their workforce because potential DSPs will be guaranteed a living wage for the critical service they provide.	• Sometimes a legal minimum threshold becomes a mental ceiling for employers who believe this is the expected wage. • Any minimum wage requirement most likely does not impact current workforce shortages since many employers already offer wages above suggested levels.

Critical Questions

- How would the group establish the wage threshold to pursue? Is it tied to inflation?
- How to ensure that Medicaid rates reflect the new wage requirement?
- How might a higher minimum wage impact other income-related benefits such as publicly funded child care, Medicaid, SNAP?
- Who would lead the effort to secure legislative approval?

Reference Materials / Attachments

https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/s5374/amendment/a

Attachment: Center for Health Care Strategies: *Strengthening the Direct care Workforce: Scan of State Strategies*