



My name is Jay O'Neill. I am owner and President of Behavioral Dimensions, Inc.

I am writing to ask for support of SF 1765 (EIDBI emergency grants)

Our company accesses the Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI) services to support approximately 90 children in 20 counties, many in rural parts of the state with approximately 50 employees. All services are provided in families homes.

My agency and others providing EIDBI services have experienced significant financial losses as a result of the pandemic surges and resulting increased staffing shortages and turnover during the great resignation. In addition, the costs of doing business have also increased with inflation and the overall costs of employing people. Agencies like ours serving the rural parts of the state are considerably impacted by COVID and the provider shortage. There are many eligible children in rural Mn unable to access any services.

100% of our revenue is through fee for services. We only get paid for the hours we bill. When services are canceled due to COVID related situations which has been a near daily occurrence for the past 3 years there is no way to make up the missed revenue. There were many months when we were providing approximately 70% of the hours we promised families because of COVID and staff shortages yet we still needed to pay existing staff 100% of their wages or they would resign.

Negative impacts of COVID and the provider shortage include,

- **Financial losses for my company:** each of the past two years totaling over \$100,000. This is obviously not sustainable.
- **An inability to expand services:** Our agency alone received approximately 140 requests for services in 2022. We were able to serve 5 of those children in our intensive program and 7 in our telehealth only services. The 5 we were able to serve were replacing children who transitioned from our program to educational programs.
- **Inability to recruit and retain key employees:** While struggling just to stay open we obviously cannot engage in the recruitment and retention activities we need to provide the services we commit to the families we serve and certainly cannot expand to serve more families.
- **Wage freezes:** key employees including some licensed or certified who oversee, supervise, and direct client's services have had their wages frozen.

This bill will help agencies essentially "plug to holes" of the losses we have and continue to suffer. Without this emergency funding I fear agencies may go out of business even further reducing the number of children receiving services

Passing SF 1765 will allow us to use the funds to,

- Recruit quality employees
- Effectively train and support staff
- Keep benefits in place
- Improve benefits
- Resume tuition and bonus systems
- Improve retention of employees who provide this essential service.

I thank you for your time.

Jay O'Neill

President and Owner

Behavioral Dimensions, Inc.