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**Option: Discontinue HB 645 OTO Direct Care Worker Wage Increase of \$1 Per Hour****DPHHS Program: Senior and Long-term Care Division****General Fund: \$4,893,692****State Special Revenue: \$0****Federal Special Revenue: \$11,550,606****For further information see [Reference Book](#) page 35** [Hide replies](#)

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Aside from the fact that this will help direct care workers stay at their jobs it also provides a substantial return of federal dollars. This too should stay.  | Wed, Sep 8, 2010 5:05 PM  |
| 2. political suicide from disability voters  | Wed, Sep 8, 2010 3:00 PM  |
| 3. Do not support  | Wed, Sep 8, 2010 12:42 PM |
| 4. "The Service Employees International Union represents long-term care workers in Montana and across the country. Several funding cuts proposed in the Reference Book on Legislative Budget Options would leave vulnerable, low-wage, long-term care workers and their clients in extremely difficult positions. In particular, eliminating waiver services ("Eliminate Additional Support of the Community Waiver Services," p. 34/37) and discontinuing worker wage increases ("Discontinue HB 645 OTO Direct Care Worker Wage Increase of \$1 Per Hour," p. 35/37) would leave many long-term care workers without the financial resources they need and would leave many aged and disabled Montanans without the continuity and quality of care they deserve. | Wed, Sep 8, 2010 11:41 AM |

We encourage the legislature to consider alternative funding opportunities to avoid these harmful cuts. In particular, we urge you to examine the feasibility of a provider fee on home and community-based agencies to draw down additional federal Medicaid shares (Reference book option "Implement Provider Fees to Pay a Portion of Medicaid State Share," p. 18/37). Montana currently uses a provider fee for Nursing Homes and Hospitals to draw down increased federal Medicaid funds. Although the legislation allowing for provider fees does not specifically speak to home and community-based agencies, SEIU has worked with national experts on proposals for home and community-based provider fees in other states and believes that they are feasible under the right circumstances.

SEIU has also worked in Montana and several states to help states analyze to what extent increased federal funding from the health care reform bill can help

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avoid cuts. Specifically, the Balancing Incentives Payment Program (BIPP) and Community First Choice Options (CFCO) could bring millions of federal dollars to Montana. SEIU early estimates indicate that BIPP will bring in \$14-\$15 million in federal funds over federal fiscal years 2012-2015. We would be honored to assist the committee by providing research or resources to help with either federal health reform option.

SEIU hopes the committee considers the short and long-term impact these cuts will have on our aged and disabled communities, long-term care workers and countless other Montanans."

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|-----|---|---------------------------|
| 5.  | Assume federal match may disappear, but need that info to respond. (Don;t have time to see ref.)  | Sat, Sep 4, 2010 11:32 AM |
| 6.  | change to .50cents a hour   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 10:11 PM |
| 7.  | If it is one time only and they have recieved it then why is it even being looked at. Once should mean once.  | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 2:09 PM  |
| 8.  | The caregivers can hardly pay their bills now. Cutting their wages would put less in our economy.   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 2:03 PM  |
| 9.  | Direct Care Workers are underpaid.<br>They should receive the increase.   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 1:47 PM  |
| 10. | The workers who received these funds are hard working health care workers whose salaries and benefits are dependent on reasonable Medicaid rates. This proposal would represent an actual cut in wages and benefits for these employees because they will receive less money in FY 2011 and FY 2012 than they are receiving currently.<br><br>For many workers, these lump sum payments were the only salary increases they received. | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 11:19 AM |
| 11. | This is an increase that is needed to keep quality hard working staff. It s/be expanded to all direct care workers including youth and DD   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 11:19 AM |
| 12. | Please continue this increase. Our seniors deserve quality care and the caregivers deserve the wage increase.   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 11:04 AM |
| 13. | I thought the governer was not going to cut social programs ?   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 11:01 AM |

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| 14.   | Montana is one of the fastest aging states in the country. We need qualified professionals to care for our parents, grandparents and other family members. Don't cut this program funding.   | Fri, Sep 3, 2010 9:49 AM  |
| <hr/> |  |                           |
| 15.   | While the providers in my association did not receive this increase and while I believe ALL providers should have been treated the same I do believe eliminating this would have very substantial consequences on staff. I DO BELIEVE ALL DIRECT CARE STAFF IN ALL PROVIDER SERVICES THAT ARE NOT SENIOR AND LONG-TERM CARE SHOULD BE GRANTED THE SAME \$1.00 AN HOUR INCREASE IN THE NEXT BIENNIUM!   | Thu, Sep 2, 2010 8:25 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                           |
| 16.   | Direct care workers are some of the hardest working and most meagerly paid employees in the state of Montana. Almost certainly, almost every penny they make goes right back into the economy as consumer spending. Cutting their wages by \$1 per hour could easily be a 10% pay cut. This will hurt the economy, not to mention that it will be taking money from some of the poorest working Montanans. Raise taxes on incomes over \$250,000 per year instead; not only is that just but it would be more effective economic stimulus.   | Thu, Sep 2, 2010 4:22 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                           |
| 17.   | The wages are extremely low throughout the entire mental health system, not just direct care workers. A decent rate increase would allow agencies to distribute the money as they need, including to direct care workers.  | Thu, Sep 2, 2010 4:07 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                           |
| 18.   | this would come across as a bonus to the caregivers because it was not designed as a sustainable wage from legislature. Caregivers make between \$7.75 (for homemaker services) to \$10.50 (for Personal assistance). These wages vary also with agency. It can be difficult at times to get good caregivers to work for our folks in their homes. The younger generation is somewhat uncomfortable providing hands on care to people. I would rather see \$ spent of inclusion of habilitation trainers, homemakers and respite workers in health insurance plans that are being provided to Personal assistance caregivers. This small group of very dedicted folks are excluded from insurance coverage due to language in original bill to provides for Personal assistance only. Unsure why that happened that way? Very unequitable! | Thu, Sep 2, 2010 3:21 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                           |
| 19.   | Reducing the wages of direct care workers has exactly the same impact as increasing the tax on the incomes of other working montanans. It takes money that is currently being spent on goods and services out of the economy at a time when both businesses and workers are struggling. This is especially true of direct care workers whose low wages make it much more likely that this money is currently being spent on the basic necessities of life.   | Thu, Sep 2, 2010 12:31 PM |
| <hr/> |  |                           |
| 20.   | This is a critical wage increase for some of the most important and most poorly paid workers in the state.   | Wed, Sep 1, 2010 9:13 PM  |
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| 21.   | I have done this job for 25 years as a case manager-the struggle to find caregivers in a rural state are immense-the wage increase has helped.   | Tue, Aug 31, 2010 7:35 AM  |
| <hr/> |  |                            |
| 22.   | PCA's need this. They work for small wages now   | Thu, Aug 26, 2010 3:37 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                            |
| 23.   | Direct Care Worker's do not get paid enough as it is and they are some of the most hardworking individuals. There is a shortage of caregivers for a reason.  | Thu, Aug 26, 2010 10:50 AM |
| <hr/> |  |                            |
| 24.   | This is a bad idea. The economy is already making our lives hard. You want to make it even harder? How about supporting the caregivers so that they can help support the community?  | Thu, Aug 26, 2010 10:37 AM |
| <hr/> |  |                            |
| 25.   | already direct care workers do not make sufficient money to feed their families. To discontinue the \$1 per hour wage increase is to create further disparity between rich and poor in our State.  | Wed, Aug 25, 2010 1:10 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                            |
| 26.   | Disagree - this is a time limited benefit that will be replaced by industry changes in Senior and long-term care.  | Sun, Aug 22, 2010 4:57 PM  |
| <hr/> |  |                            |
| 27.   | High turn over of direct care providers results in compromised quality of care to the individual receiving services. Recruiting, training and orienting new staff also costs additional time and money. Direct care provider work deserves a reasonable reimbursement rate. Many direct care providers need to work multiple jobs resulting in less time with their families/children. |                            |

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**answered question****skipped question**