



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Division of Labor Standards & Statistics
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DIRECT CARE STABILIZATION BOARD MEETING

Date of Hearing: November 22, 2024

Appearances: Stephanie Felix-Sowy
Carrie Chesney

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Ditto Transcripts

P R O C E E D I N G S

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MR. DON KNOX: Hey, Stacey? Hey, Carrie?

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Hello. Can you hear me?

MR. DON KNOX: I can. Can you hear me?

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. Okay. Hey, how's it going?

MR. DON KNOX: Good. Is there an agenda for the meeting?

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, I did. I sent it out, actually, and I just emailed you all. So it's attached there. You can just link to it if you click on it.

MR. DON KNOX: You just send it to us via email?

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. About an hour ago, I sent a bunch of docs to you guys.

MR. DON KNOX: I saw the notes doc and I saw the -- the --

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: It's just a link.

MR. DON KNOX: -- standards doc.

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, it's just a link. So if you click, you should -- let me make sure. I thought I did. If I didn't --

MR. DON KNOX: Would it be --

MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: -- I apologize.

MR. DON KNOX: Would it be under your last name, Chesney?

26 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

27 MR. DON KNOX: Oh, documents.

28 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Sorry. And I need to change
29 my name here. It comes through as the person who owns
30 this. Let's see.

31 MR. DON KNOX: Oh, there's the agenda. I see it.
32 Okay.

33 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: There we go. Okay.
34 How are you, Mary Jo?

35 MARY JO: Good. How are you?

36 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I'm doing good.

37 MARY JO: Good.

38 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Doing good. Busy, busy
39 gettin' ready for the holidays.

40 MARY JO: I bet.

41 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

42 MARY JO: I bet. It's flying, isn't it? I can't
43 believe --

44 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I know, yeah.

45 MARY JO: Like, Halloween, now Thanksgiving.
46 Yeah. We got my -- I got my tree up because my son was,
47 like, beggin' to put it up, so I said, all right, let's get
48 it up.

49 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. Yeah. It's the
50 downward slide. I call it --

51 MARY JO: Yeah.

52 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: -- the downward slide --

53 MARY JO: Yep.

54 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: -- to New Year, yep.

55 MARY JO: For sure.

56 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: All right. It looks like

57 we'll start here in a few minutes, once we -- so everybody

58 trickles in, so -- hello, everyone. I hope everyone is

59 doing well today. Looks like we're still waiting on a few

60 people, so -- all right. I see Stephanie. So, Stephanie,

61 I'll turn it over to you whenever you're ready.

62 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Can -- hi. Thanks,

63 Carrie.

64 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Hi.

65 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Can you share the

66 agenda link also?

67 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes. I can put that in the

68 chat.

69 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: [Inaudible]

70 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. Let me do that real

71 quick. Hold on just a second.

72 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Thank you.

73 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

74 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And then I'm about to

75 share somethin' with you. I can share it or you can share

76 it. I think I -- I'm trying to track which part of the
77 agenda it's on.

78 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay. All right. I just
79 put the link to the agenda in the notes or in the chat box.
80 Sorry.

81 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. Hello,
82 everybody. Happy Friday.

83 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: Hello.

84 FEMALE: Happy Friday.

85 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: Happy Friday.

86 FEMALE: Hello.

87 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Hi there. We'll go
88 ahead and go through and identify and mark present those
89 board members who are on. I see Mary Jo, Sandra, Jen
90 Oakes, Colin, Christina, Dr. Cox.

91 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: What?

92 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I hope you're staying
93 safe, Don. And Joe [inaudible].

94 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: Go away.

95 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Am I missing anyone?

96 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: I'm in a meetin'. Bye.

97 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I don't think so. Let's
98 see. I did think --

99 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: Go out. No.

100 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: -- Kathleen is going to be

101 late. She said she was going to be here maybe about an
102 hour late, so --

103 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: [Inaudible]

104 MS. EARLENE ANDERSON: Did you get me, Stephanie?

105 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I did. Hi, Earlene.

106 MS. EARLENE ANDERSON: Hi. Hi, everybody.

107 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: Hello.

108 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. And then, I
109 know Julie is out on a well-deserved sabbatical.

110 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Right.

111 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: She'll be back next
112 year. And then -- so that's it for the roll call. Carrie,
113 can I hand it to you to give us --

114 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Sure.

115 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- an update on open
116 seats? Yeah.

117 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. So I am still waiting
118 on one of the applicants, so I was hoping to try and get
119 them to the meeting today but, unfortunately, that didn't
120 happen. I will likely go ahead, and once everything is
121 good, introduce them at least via email, and they'll be
122 here at the next meeting. So --

123 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: They've already been
124 selected?

125 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Not -- well, we're -- we're

126 still kinda going through the process. We're running
127 background checks right now, so yeah.

128 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Got ya.

129 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, yeah. We got about 11
130 applicants for the position, so it was a good little pool
131 we can -- we can pull from. Stephanie, you're muted.

132 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Does everybody know
133 which seats those were that we're trying to --

134 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Those were employer side, so
135 it was two employers. Yeah.

136 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So Alexa --

137 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Alexa Consulting, yeah.

138 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: As well as Wesleyan
139 for those two.

140 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes, that's correct.

141 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Is there -- is there some
142 distinction as to what type of providers? Was one of those
143 intellectual development and disability related provider,
144 Carrie?

145 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I believe Alexa was.

146 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay.

147 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: And then, we had Wesleyan
148 Elder Care, I believe. Yeah.

149 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay.

150 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: And we are trying to kind of

151 do that same little balance when looking at applicants to
152 make sure that we have someone from elder care and someone
153 from IDD, so --

154 MR. DON KNOX: Carrie, was there a rural
155 component, too, to one of those?

156 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I think you actually already
157 fill the role component. However, there were applicants
158 that, did put on their application that they are from the
159 rural areas, and so they are they have been considered for
160 sure.

161 MR. DON KNOX: Okay. Thank you.

162 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Because we only need one --
163 one from each, so -- but yeah.

164 MR. DON KNOX: So I am in -- I'm Grand Lakes, so
165 I guess that would be --

166 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. I think it was you,
167 but it might -- it might not have been you, but I'm pretty
168 sure it was you. If it's not you, we -- we got several
169 people this time from rural areas actually. Whereas, I
170 don't think we did in the first batch. So -- so we're
171 definitely taking that into consideration, as well, area of
172 -- of where they're at.

173 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. Great. And so,
174 once -- once they're appointed, you'll let us know, even if
175 --

176 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes.

177 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- it's [inaudible]
178 time.

179 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, yeah.

180 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. Okay.

181 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Oh, and as we start, the
182 time limits I put on these topics are kind of arbitrary.
183 Like, if you guys want to take more time to talk about what
184 you guys want to accomplish this year and what you need to
185 kind of do, you can do that. We did already come up with a
186 mock-up of the direct care notice that is required for the
187 board to have made a template of and that requirement does
188 come out of the legislation. So I will -- I'll speak about
189 that when we get to that section. But I did already email
190 it to you guys. I may go ahead and put it in the -- well,
191 yeah. I went ahead and emailed it to you all, so do check
192 your emails since we do have a mock-up of that.

193 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And you'll be able to
194 screen share that?

195 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, I'll screen share when
196 we get to that part.

197 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: But I have -- I have
198 -- I'm sorry. I did not catch that.

199 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. No worries.

200 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: [Inaudible] So we can

201 review that. That's fine.

202 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

203 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Good. Oh, you already
204 did all the work that I was gonna reference and ask if you
205 could do.

206 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, it's it's a lot of
207 little pieces in different places in the legislation. So
208 we wanted to make sure to capture it all.

209 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. Perfect. So
210 we'll go ahead and review that. And then I had sent you --
211 okay. Well, let's get through this piece, and then I also
212 sent you something else that I've kind of just, like,
213 started on but, again, all of the work you did was nec- --
214 was needed, so maybe we can just combine it. Great.

215 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Awesome.

216 MS. VERNA SMITH: Can you guys pick me up yet?
217 It's Verna. Yeah, Verna. We can hear ya.

218 MS. VERNA SMITH: Good. Carrie, I missed what
219 you were saying when I first came in. Were you talking
220 about applicants for the -- the --

221 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, for the open positions
222 or vacant direct care employer positions, yes. Yeah. So
223 we're still -- we're still in process on that. We have a
224 couple people in mind, and we're --

225 MS. VERNA SMITH: Did you get one from me?

226 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I'm sorry?

227 MS. VERNA SMITH: Did you get a referral from me?

228 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: So the applicants were
229 directed to go through our -- on our Google, like,
230 application. So everybody we got --

231 MS. VERNA SMITH: [Inaudible]

232 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: -- was from the Google --
233 Google application, so anyone who applied through there.

234 MS. VERNA SMITH: Okay. So because I got
235 somebody that -- that I think would benefit being --
236 benefit the group and benefit herself at the same time, but
237 she's an owner of -- of a local company here, small
238 company.

239 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Sure. Sorry, I don't know
240 what's happening with my visual here.

241 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: You've gone blurred.

242 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Blurry, I know. It's
243 decided to blur all of me instead of just my background.
244 Sorry. Let me stop video.

245 MS. VERNA SMITH: Oh, now you're a white spot in
246 the middle of a black screen.

247 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Sorry, guys. My visual does
248 this occasionally. Go ahead and keep going, Stephanie.

249 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I'm not sure if Verna
250 had a -- any other -- if you had a response for Verna.

251 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. We've already taken
252 applicants, and the deadline was November 12th, so they
253 would have needed to apply through the Google poll.

254 MS. VERNA SMITH: Okay.

255 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Or the Google -- yeah.

256 MS. VERNA SMITH: [Inaudible] we will hold on
257 'til -- for next time then.

258 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay. Sounds great.

259 MS. VERNA SMITH: [Inaudible]

260 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, definitely.

261 MS. VERNA SMITH: Hello, Stephanie.

262 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Hi, Verna. Glad you
263 could join us.

264 MS. VERNA SMITH: Thank you. Long time, no see.

265 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. It's been a
266 minute. We're all so used to seeing each other much more
267 often.

268 MS. VERNA SMITH: Right. Face-to-face.

269 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. So, Verna and
270 group, if you haven't been able to open the agenda, I'll
271 just go through it fairly quickly, and I keep losing it, so
272 my apologies. MS. VERNA SMITH: I didn't know where to
273 look for the agenda.

274 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: That's okay. I'm
275 gonna go ahead and go through it really quick so we know

276 what's -- what to expect for the rest of the call. So as
277 you also -- as you all heard, Carrie did give us an update
278 about the two open board positions that our employer seats.
279 Hopefully, we can get those filled and they will be able to
280 join us on our first meeting of 2025. She we'll let us
281 know through an email update once those are appointed.
282 Thank you, Carrie. We're gonna discuss a little bit about
283 and go into our schedule for 2025, mainly meeting times,
284 but then also there is -- there was a conversation I wanted
285 to just have with this group about ideas on -- on what we
286 would like to -- to tackle and prepare for for 2025. So we
287 can go over that. And then I'm gonna ask in that section
288 if, Carrie, you can just remind the group again referencing
289 the bill, you know, what -- what we have to do and then
290 versus, you know what -- what work we might want to take up
291 following up on this year's work. And then we will do a
292 review and approval of the direct care worker posting
293 notice. So that's going to be a big chunk of the work that
294 we do today, and any announcements or reminders. If
295 anybody has anything you'd like to add, you can drop it
296 into the -- into the chat or raise your hand and we'll see
297 what we can do about adding it. Okay.

298 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: I was -- just had one thing
299 that might be helpful. Just to add the governor's budget,
300 as a talking point. I know, I think, there were some items

301 proposed that will affect some of our recommendations. So
302 if we could get to that at some point today.

303 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. I will ask, I -
304 - I'm not an expert on the governor's budget. I've seen
305 it, but have -- I don't -- couldn't speak to it. Can I see
306 if possibly maybe Colin --

307 MR. JASVINDER DHESI: Haven't you seen it, like,
308 500 times?

309 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: What's that?

310 MR. HASVINDER DHESI: Oh.

311 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Maybe if Colin could
312 possibly give us a quick update if -- I know we didn't give
313 you the heads up, Colin, but I know you've been givin' lots
314 of people updates. If you're -- if you don't mind giving
315 us the 50,000-foot --

316 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. Do you want me to do
317 that now, or do we want to -- I could try to keep it to,
318 like, three minutes, although I don't know if you want the
319 extended version.

320 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah. Or at least I figured
321 the topic might -- might open up, you know, at least a
322 five, ten minute discussion. So whenever that -- whenever
323 it's most convenient for that.

324 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay. Yeah. Let's say --
325 let's do it now because it might lead us into maybe what we

326 want to take up in the beginning of the year as well,
327 right, in conversation. I know some of those pieces did --
328 did make me think about what -- what we could take up as as
329 work for 2025. So we can go ahead and do that now.

330 Thank you, Colin, for --

331 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. Of course. So I -- I
332 think first and foremost, and I -- I know many of you
333 probably are familiar with sort of the overarching budget
334 situation in Colorado, but just to kind of give a quick
335 refresher, and I won't sort of perseverate too much on
336 this. It's -- it's really tough, frankly. It's a very
337 tough budget situation. There's no two ways around it.
338 The fact of the matter is, and depending on who you ask,
339 this number can fluctuate slightly, but for all intents and
340 purposes, what folks are talking about is, it's about a
341 million --or, excuse me, a billion dollar shortfall. And
342 that is including the -- the TABOR growth that the state's
343 budget is allowed to grow by. And really, it's -- the
344 reason we're in that situation is -- is sort of threefold.
345 One, and we certainly planned for this, but we're at the
346 end of a period of time that has seen really unprecedented
347 federal investments in -- in certain programs that have
348 freed up general fund dollars, and that has allowed a lot
349 more flexibility over the last couple years in particular
350 in how the -- the legislature and, I think,

351 correspondingly, how advocates and providers and others
352 have been able to engage the legislature and ask for things
353 and, by and large, I think see a lot of investment there.
354 And we're very proud to have partnered with many of you to
355 get those investments, in particular the Direct Care
356 Workforce, over half a billion dollars invested in rates
357 and base wages over the last couple of years. The --
358 really the issue is -- is -- kind of combined is to -- what
359 many of us have seen and probably been appreciative of is
360 the slowing down of inflation, right, impacting sort of
361 what happens there, but it's also the slowing down of the
362 population rate here in Colorado, coupled with sort of the
363 cap on spending with TABOR and what constitutionally is --
364 is allowed for the state to -- to spend within that cap.
365 And because there are already pretty significant
366 commitments in that area, i.e., you know, Medicaid programs
367 being a big one, but other programs that are growing, just
368 the cost of them are growing, and the projected --
369 projections have always been there, have created a pretty
370 untenable situation for continued significant investment in
371 some of these areas. So I think the big -- big thing for
372 this group is a lot of hard choices within the governor's
373 budget had to be made. You will see in other areas of the
374 budget there are pretty significant cuts. There are a
375 handful of Medicaid cuts, none of which really impact the

376 direct care workforce. Frankly, none of which -- I
377 shouldn't say not really. I should say, none of which
378 affected the Direct Care Workforce. We, at Medicaid,
379 including [inaudible] Bonnie Silva and executive director
380 Kim [inaudible] really wanted to make sure we are taking
381 thoughtful approaches to how -- doing this right. And so
382 what we had asked for was the ability to sort of use a
383 scalpel, not a chainsaw. And I use that analogy in the
384 sense that there are some slight adjustments within a
385 couple of different programs to account for a federal
386 requirement from Community First Choice, which is a
387 significant benefit expansion that will allow pretty much
388 everyone on a HCBS waiver to [inaudible] IHHS or to get --
389 now get personal care or [inaudible] health maintenance
390 activities, all of which are services that a good portion
391 of -- of folks were unable to access previously. So while
392 we're happy that's happening, we're going to have to adjust
393 some programs in order to align rates, which is a federal
394 requirement when you're offering like services across
395 waivers and you're combining that into one neutral sort of
396 eligibility component, which is Community First Choice or
397 waiver. And so that -- there's a couple adjustments there,
398 but we were very happy, in this environment to not see any
399 across-the-board or significant cuts to long-term care,
400 specifically to programs that are served by individuals in

401 the direct care workforce. So, while there's no cuts,
402 there are also no increases. And there really isn't an
403 area within this budget where there is a significant -- is
404 that the case for everyone, or is it just Jen? Can
405 everyone hear me?

406 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I think it was -- I
407 think Verna's was on. We muted it, so I think we can hear
408 now.

409 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay. Is that -- am I good?
410 Okay. Did everyone get -- did everyone get the first five
411 minutes, or do I need to re- --

412 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. You're good, you're
413 good.

414 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Thank you. I've
415 surprisingly had this conversation a lot, and it's an
416 important one. But I -- I -- it's sort of at the point,
417 where I stop there, there are no increases, and I don't
418 think you're going to see many areas in this budget
419 proposal by the governor and -- and [inaudible] that have
420 increases of any kind. The budget simply won't allow for
421 that. So to increase the way that we've been doing over
422 the last three years to both establish the base wage but
423 then increase it up to where we're at now, very happy with
424 where we're at now, that has taken over half a billion
425 dollars of which we just don't have. So I think what Joe

426 is probably alluding to is, there are going to be increases
427 to the state minimum wage, which, you know, se-lä-vē. the
428 -- the CPI will adjust there. There's not really a concern
429 as to where the base wage requirement's at right now and
430 what that increase looks like, not to say that there's not
431 considerations and impacts more broadly in the marketplace
432 with that increase but, you know, understanding that we're
433 well above that marker right now. However, that -- that
434 also means that the City and County of Denver currently
435 does not have a proposed increase as part of the governor's
436 budget, and there will be an increase within the City and
437 County of Denver with -- with the growth there that will be
438 unaccounted for. I will say -- and we do plan on putting
439 out some numbers once we sort of get done with our audits
440 and putting the final touches on this last year's reporting
441 around the base wage. I am -- I'm happy to report that the
442 information we have now shows that people are above that
443 new marker in terms of what the average wage is, and most
444 people are already paying above what that new -- new wage
445 will be. But we understand that creates hardships, and
446 certainly think there needs to be some conversations as to,
447 you know, what -- what we can do. But at this time, as a
448 department, with everything else that's happening with the
449 budget, with things that are being cut, with, I think,
450 conversations that are still going to happen over the

451 legislative term about bigger cuts or across-the-board
452 cuts, we are, I think, happy probably isn't the best word,
453 but we feel okay with where we ended up given the
454 circumstances and the totality of the budget situation. I
455 would also say, you know, when you're talking about across-
456 the-board cuts, one of the things I like to point out is
457 that 1 or 2 or 3 percent cut for personal care certainly
458 hits a heck of a lot harder than a 1 or 2 or 3 percent cut
459 for primary care or anesthesiology or some type of surgery.
460 Right? The margins are just so much thinner and closer,
461 both for -- for the workers and providers, but also for the
462 members in terms of being able to receive the services that
463 they need to live successfully in the community and live
464 the lives that they choose lead. So it's -- it's a tough
465 year. The conversations are not done. We, frankly, have,
466 like, six more months of this at least, and we'll be there
467 to have those conversations, but we're -- we're sort of in
468 a place right now where we -- we feel okay with where it
469 ended up, obviously wish the broader situation was a lot
470 brighter, but given where, again, the budget started and
471 what could have happened, you know, there are certainly
472 worse things than sort of staying pat and -- and we're, you
473 know, going to have to have those conversations and guard
474 against that, and I hope you guys can help us with that.
475 I don't know, Joe. Did that get to what you were wanting?

476 Did I get the correct allusion there or --

477 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah, yeah.

478 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: I assumed you were alluding
479 to the nonincrease in the base wage. Right?

480 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: I had seen other -- other data
481 that, Don, were you gonna hop in?

482 MR. DON KNOX: Well, I was gonna -- I did -- I'm
483 trying to understand. So the Denver minimum wage rate is
484 going to increase, but there will not be a corresponding
485 increase in reimbursement for HCBS. Is that right?

486 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Correct.

487 MR. DON KNOX: But because the home care base
488 wage is higher than the Denver minimum wage, there will be
489 no negative --

490 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Lower.

491 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. It's not higher than
492 the Denver minimum wage.

493 MR. DON KNOX: Oh, the base wage is lower.

494 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

495 MR. DON KNOX: Okay. So then there will be a
496 negative impact on agencies, right, in Denver? They will
497 be receiving the same or less but having to pay more. Is
498 that right?

499 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Correct. Which my -- the
500 point I was making, Don, is that the data that we have, and

501 we'll publicize this --

502 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah.

503 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: -- once we get all of our
504 friendly agencies out there to give us what we need.

505 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah. Yeah.

506 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: We will publicize this
507 probably in the new year, but the data shows that people
508 are already being reimbursed above what will be the new
509 Denver [inaudible]. And so while we understand it is
510 certainly a factor and a downward pressure, it could be
511 construed that way --

512 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah.

513 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: -- we do believe it's --
514 it's -- it's less of an impact than it may appear on its
515 face. That's not to say or sort of, you know, take back,
516 you know, any negative repercussions of -- of the overall
517 budget situation, but the data shows we're sort of in a
518 better place than a lot of different programs when it comes
519 to where the base wage will go with the new minimum.

520 MR. DON KNOX: But -- but the margins will
521 definitely decrease. Right?

522 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Presumably. I'm --

523 MR. DON KNOX: There's no doubt --

524 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: I still am not --

525 MR. DON KNOX: Presumably, yeah.

526 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: I'm not privy to --

527 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah.

528 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: -- the administrative
529 margins of home care agencies.

530 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I guess what I
531 -- I guess the point I would make is that the -- a lot of
532 the discussion the past year for this board has been that
533 wages will go up as reimbursement goes up, but when
534 reimbursement stays flat and minimum wage goes up, the --
535 the agencies are -- are bearing the the burden.

536 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Mm-hmm.

537 MR. DON KNOX: And -- and that's -- that's --
538 that's the wrong way. Right? That's the way we don't want
539 it to happen. And, Colin, I know you're in a bad
540 situation, but I would just point -- you know, make that
541 point in -- just over and over again, it's the wrong
542 direction. Right?

543 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. I don't -- I don't --

544 MR. DON KNOX: It makes it difficult -- it makes
545 it more difficult for an employer to provide wage -- higher
546 wages. You can't provide higher wages and higher ben- --
547 better benefits on less. You know, it's just not possible.
548 So --

549 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Right.

550 MR. DON KNOX: That's my -- that's my assessment.

551 Joe, did you want to say anything?

552 MR. JOE SHIPEE: Yeah, yeah. And I know it was
553 certainly encouraging that, you know, there were no across-
554 the-board cuts and, you know, at least as a -- as a bright
555 spot. I'm not sure if I'm seeing the same data or not but,
556 Colin, you mentioned the rate for realignment and -- and
557 the -- as I understand it from my reading of it, it appears
558 that means that there's some personal care and homemaking
559 rates that are going down anywhere from 1 percent to 10
560 percent, which is --

561 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yep. Correspondingly, there
562 is also increases, as well. But, yeah, there is going to
563 be some alignment depending on which waivers you serve
564 there. There could be adjustments there, yes.

565 MR. JOE SHIPEE: Right. So, you know, some of
566 the increases, I believe, related to some, for example,
567 relative care, which is great. Unfortunately, it appears
568 to be the nonrelatives, you know, the -- frequently direct
569 care workers, the majority of the people we're talking
570 about most of the time, that those are the rates that are
571 getting hit. I think -- I think a homemaking right now 9,
572 10 percent lower. I mean, that is -- that's a very big
573 challenge, you know, and then you add on top, the -- the
574 Denver minimum wage increase, as well, which kind of, at
575 least in the metro area, affects all -- all areas because

576 somebody on the border of Denver, Aurora says, I'll just go
577 to Denver, you know, if they don't pay me the same. So
578 that -- that was what I was curious about, because I know
579 that it's rate realignment, and it appeared, though -- I
580 mean, I know, it -- it's supposed to all balance out, but -
581 - but from what I've seen it, it doesn't appear to, and I
582 know it's probably a better situation than could have
583 happened, you know, and really appreciate the fact that,
584 hey, you know, people realize that this is something that -
585 - that cannot be cut in the same way you would, you know, a
586 primary care -- care, you know, someplace where the margins
587 are extremely different. But on the other hand, it is, you
588 know -- it is challenging to see -- to see some of the, you
589 know -- and like I said, anywhere from 1 to almost 10
590 percent, you know, because, you know, we want to -- we want
591 to try and advance things, you know, based on our
592 recommendations. You know, the -- if we want to -- we want
593 to try and -- if the goal is 25 an hour or higher, gosh,
594 you know, where's -- where's that gonna come from, you
595 know.

596 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. And I -- so, Joe,
597 that's -- I think that's perfectly well-explained and a
598 reasonable concern and argument there at the end. I -- I
599 can't speak to -- and I don't believe HCBS has stated on
600 the record that our goal, in particular under the current

601 conditions, the current funding, is 25 an hour. Right? I
602 think everyone, whether you're wearing state hat, a union
603 hat, a provider hat, would agree that there has to be more
604 investment in order to get there. Right? I don't --

605 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Oh, yeah, yeah.

606 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: So I just want to clarify
607 that, like, who's saying what, because I think that's
608 important. Two, I think -- I appreciate the percentages.
609 Right? But we were thoughtful in going through this when
610 we were looking at various service lines to -- to try to
611 adjust in looking at, you know, if we're gonna drop
612 homemaker here, let's try to boost it up over here. And I
613 -- I assume, I don't recall off the top of my head, because
614 there's so many now, but are you an IHHS provider?

615 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Both. IHHS and [inaudible].

616 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. So IHHS is the single
617 fastest growing type of -- of service line for us. It's
618 huge. Right? And so, you see in some of those other areas
619 we are actually increasing [inaudible] for personal care
620 and for other things. So, like I -- I understand, and --
621 and if you're looking at this sort of with that one line in
622 Denver, that's a -- that's a big hit. I'm not here to
623 argue otherwise. Like, I get that. I think what -- what I
624 would say is that, you know, we tried, genuinely tried, and
625 we think we did as good a job as we could given some of the

626 restrictions we had on trying to align these things. Like,
627 for example, SLS in some areas was like \$1, \$1.50 more.
628 Like, we -- we -- that alone, in order to align this to the
629 highest possible amount, takes 50 million in general funds
630 just to give you --

631 MR. JOE SHOPPEE: Yeah. No. And that -- that
632 makes sense. That was already kind of an outlier, yeah.

633 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Right. So just in order to
634 -- but, like, even some of those -- those smaller ones to
635 go up was significant. So, yeah, there are some drops that
636 were tough pill to swallow, and I -- I -- I, again, don't
637 want to say, like, this is an area that, you know, you --
638 you can't have feelings about or sort of be upset about and
639 to push back on that. Not at all. I think when you're
640 looking at, again, where we're at with the budget, the
641 situation that I think we're in with both the budget, but I
642 think the state of the workforce and the investments that
643 we've done, again, over half a billion dollars of
644 investments focused largely on the services that are in
645 this -- and I'm assuming you're looking at the R9 table.
646 So I get that. But it's like, you know, we -- we've really
647 gone pretty hard at these over the last couple of years.
648 And then I would also add the fact that we're talking about
649 back of the napkin probably 25,000 new people that will be
650 eligible now for IHHS [inaudible] children eligible for

651 homemaker in many regards where there are previously more,
652 talking about legally responsible persons, which I know is
653 a big model for a lot of home care agencies out there,
654 providing that, being able to access an entirely new
655 population and -- and, luckily, this is a win-win for
656 everyone. I mean, this is allowing people with various
657 disability types, irrespective of what type of disability,
658 to access a service. Right? They used to have to be
659 bucketed. And if you [inaudible] maybe you can get this,
660 but you don't get this if you're on the BI waiver. So I --
661 I get it. I get the frustration and concern there. I
662 think given the circumstances, again, where the budget's
663 at, what we need to accomplish to roll out CFC and the
664 investments that we've gotten in over the last three years,
665 I -- I'll take it. I mean, it's not -- it's not, you know,
666 a day that I -- on November 1, we went live, so it's not,
667 like, a day that I, like, celebrated by any means. It was
668 probably one of the most dour days of calls that we've had
669 in a while for a budget release, but I think the
670 alternative was pretty stark. And that's not -- that
671 reality hasn't left. Right? Like, we can continue to see
672 the legislature want to make investments elsewhere. And
673 so, I -- I hear you, and I'm happy to sit down, and have
674 set down with the Homecare Association, and I'm happy to
675 sit down with you guys in greater detail and go over that.

676 But, yeah, it's tough. I'm --

677 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah.

678 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: -- I'm not gonna sit here
679 and tell you it's not.

680 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah. No. And I -- again, I
681 appreciate everything you've done because we know that, you
682 know, there's -- there's limited funds out there, and --
683 and this could have been very different, you know, so -- so
684 yeah. Don't -- don't interpret it, you know -- you know,
685 as if it's not -- there's no grateful -- gratefulness --

686 MR. COLIN LUAGHLIN: No, no. I --

687 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: -- for what you guys are trying
688 to do.

689 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: I hear ya.

690 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: You know.

691 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: I appreciate that.

692 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah. It's definitely -- I
693 just think it's -- it's also helpful for -- for everyone on
694 the board to be aware of the situation. Also, to the
695 extent that, you know, all of us, in our -- our unique
696 places, are able to, you know, at least do our part in
697 education. I will say again, just from looking at -- at
698 the rates for -- for personal care and homemaking at least,
699 I believe all but one of the -- because you've got the rate
700 realignment. Right? So you guys are trying to make it all

701 balance out a little better so that, you know, because of
702 random factors, one person's not getting extraordinarily
703 higher. You know, we can't pay it certainly higher to one
704 particular service category just because of how the rates
705 have ended up, so I understand the realignment. I do see
706 that almost all the increases are going to relatives. Not
707 saying it's not deserved. Absolutely. That's great. But
708 for many, just as it -- where the rubber hits the road for
709 a lot of the -- the board here, I know that -- I get a
710 sense -- maybe I'm -- maybe I'm wrong, but I guess since a
711 lot of -- a lot of the direct care workers, if not the
712 majority, are not that relative provider that is there
713 anywhere from an hour a day to eight hours a day in some
714 cases. It's majority not relatives that are always making
715 this their career. They -- oftentimes they -- they kind of
716 fall into it, you know, as -- as circumstances lead to, but
717 --

718 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah.

719 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: -- someone who's maybe not a
720 relative and doing this, almost all the cards fall on the
721 nonrelatives. So, again, just -- just so -- just so there
722 is transparency, this is what we're dealing with. And so,
723 I suppose net -- you know, the balance of it all is that,
724 okay, the relatives are getting -- getting -- getting some
725 increases, the nonrelative direct care workers are getting

726 some -- some cuts, and just -- just, again, so like -- and
727 we know this is just a proposal, but, again, like I said at
728 the beginning, to the extent you need places to educate
729 people we know, it -- It's just good to know this is what
730 we're looking at right now.

731 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yep. Yeah. Fair. I think
732 I -- I guess with -- so the -- it's an order of magnitude
733 problem. I mean, I think if you look at the -- the
734 alignment total impact is really where you see sort of the
735 movement come about. And, again, this is, like, very, in
736 the weeds for probably this board as it stands right now.
737 So I don't -- I don't want to get high ended here for --
738 for staff. So we can move on, Joe. Happy to follow up
739 with -- with the homecare folks, if you'd like. I'd point
740 out, like, there's also -- I mean, when we're talking about
741 cuts, you brought up, like, the 6 percent and 7 percent or
742 whatever. I mean, there's -- some of the cuts we're
743 talking about, in particular with personal care, it's .8
744 percent. Right? And so, again, when we're talking about
745 what's paid out there and we're worried about the margin,
746 right, that's the word that Don is worried about, the
747 margin, like, even with this and the alignment, with the --
748 with the investments that we've done, with the expansion of
749 populations, like, I -- I think this proposal, with
750 everything taken into account, is a very fair and -- and

751 balanced way to move things forward, but if, you know,
752 people disagree, they disagree, and we can continue to have
753 that conversation. I'm -- I'm happily, you know, able to -
754 - to kind of listen to that feedback and can catch up
755 offline. The one thing I would say, and I think, Joe, you
756 alluded to this is, the conversation is not done. Right?
757 This is a proposal. I would imagine that, you know,
758 legislators, particularly those on the Joint Budget
759 Committee, may have different feelings. They've already
760 expressed certain feelings about other areas of the budget.
761 I'm sure they'll continue to do that as we go into briefing
762 and hearing time. You know, that said, we're committed to
763 working with people. So if there is an alternative
764 proposal that people think is more equitable, we're happy
765 to sit down. We're happy to sit down and talk through
766 that. But at the end of the day, you know, this is a tough
767 situation. We're sort of between a rock and a hard place,
768 and being able to to maneuver between those and come out
769 without any deep cuts to programs that we know have been
770 underfunded for years, the last three years aside, is -- is
771 sort of where we're at. So I would just put that out there
772 if you are, as an organization, planning on having side
773 conversations or additional conversations, but we're --
774 we're happy to -- to engage as well. So, yeah.

775 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Thanks, Colin. Yeah.

776 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. Thank you.

777 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Thanks, Colin. And I
778 shared this with Colin. I'll do it publicly, as well, and
779 I think a few -- a few have already mentioned and
780 referenced it, you know, I think the position that HCBS has
781 been in is not an easy position when it comes to a budget.
782 The way that I think -- you said it really lightly, Colin,
783 kind of the -- the position that the state is in and the
784 budget is in. And so, I would also just lift up the work
785 that everybody on this -- on this call and other advocates
786 have done in working with HCBS, and I'm gonna put a stick
787 in there for -- for the -- the folks providing and
788 receiving care that -- like, the work that you all have
789 done in advocacy and raising the voices and the importance,
790 and then I'm just kind of looking at kind of the very
791 diverse type of care and caregivers that, you know, I think
792 had that work not all been done, right, along with
793 everybody here, we might be in a different conversation
794 where folks are trying to come after this very essential
795 part of our -- of our state budget, and, you know,
796 hopefully we can continue to -- to protect it and, you
797 know, coming out of '25, maybe see a different path
798 forward, but I think that's going to take work within this
799 board, as well as outside of this board and a lot of -- a
800 lot of allies and, you know, continued advocacy and making

801 sure that folks really understand the importance of the
802 work that is needed, as well as the work that is done, so
803 --

804 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yep. Well said. Thanks,
805 Steph.

806 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. And so, I
807 think -- we'll jump into -- I think this is a good segue.
808 I took some notes on what we might be able to dig in on for
809 next year. Carrie, can you remind the board of the
810 requirements, specific requirements needed, for the -- for
811 the board to meet as far as participation or outreach for
812 2025, and then we can kinda dig in a little bit.

813 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: So the Senate bill requires
814 you guys only -- you guys can hear me. Right? My -- my
815 camera is not working. I'm sorry. Okay. So the Senate
816 bill only requires you to meet once quarterly. Now -- now
817 that we're through the first year, after that first
818 September 1st recommendations run, you guys don't have to
819 give recommendations more than once every other year. So
820 you can do it more frequently. I know -- I think you guys
821 talked about previously doing it, like, once a year. But
822 keep in mind, if you're gonna do that, like if you're
823 planning on doing things like public hearings, we, as in
824 CDLE, who has to kind of plan and coordinate that, we'll
825 need to know that pretty early on, which is part of why I

826 wanted you guys to kind of discuss this, so -- and also
827 like, maybe, you know, this is a volunteer board, maybe you
828 don't want to meet monthly. Maybe you want to meet every
829 other month. Maybe you don't want -- you know, you have to
830 at least meet quarterly. That's the main thing. That's --
831 that's the main requirement, but it's up to you guys. I'd
832 also like you guys to come up with, like, which specific
833 day is it? Because I know last year we kind of traded
834 between, like, the second and third Friday. I think
835 Fridays are still great, but maybe just pick one, and so
836 our main meetings can kind of follow a flow and everybody
837 can kind of know what's going on. That's all I got.

838 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. Just to be
839 clear, we -- the recommendations are every-other year, so
840 this board would not be required to produce recommendations
841 technically for next year, should we choose to. I think
842 that's, you know, a different conversation. And then
843 meeting once quarterly is the requirement. So I think
844 that's another question for folks. Before we kind of go
845 into those pieces, I think I'd just like to lift up maybe
846 some of the things that, you know, were either, carryovers
847 from last -- from our last conversations and the
848 recommendations, and then some of the pieces that I believe
849 that might be helpful for us to consider as topics or goals
850 for 2025, and then maybe we do an assessment of how often

851 we think we might need to meet. But before we do an
852 assessment of how often we think we need to meet, also
853 wondering if other folks have identified things that we
854 want to make sure that we bring forward and tackle in our
855 2025 meetings. So, Colin, as you were going through your
856 pieces, it reminded me of one of the recommendations, and
857 you said you were going to be completing the data. And
858 then I'm just gonna cut and paste kind of the language
859 here. And just to make sure to give you guys a heads up as
860 far as if we could, some of the information and some of the
861 data that -- that would be helpful, I think, for some of
862 the conversations for 2025.

863 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah.

864 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And then if you could
865 just give us like a -- your timeline. We won't put a
866 deadline, but just like -- I know you guys are adding or
867 collecting data. Right? So that's the language --

868 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yep.

869 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- from there. So I
870 thought it would -- if -- if you can give us a timeline,
871 then we can kind of set it in our meetings as far as, like,
872 when we could maybe have a session with you where we could
873 ask questions or get clarity or do any follow up.

874 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. So that data is sort
875 of the share of the rate. Right? I think the -- just

876 calling it the percentage just sort of based on some of the
877 conversations that have happened federally. We probably
878 would be able to have that conversation this winter. I'm
879 not sure if it will be January. I say that because we --
880 we're sort of in the middle of our audit right now, and
881 depending on how that goes, but I -- and I don't think
882 Heather is on. Jazz, would February -- I don't know if you
883 can speak to that. I don't want to put you on the spot.
884 How about -- how about I say this? Sometime this winter or
885 early spring, we can do that presentation and sort of go
886 through the numbers. The one other thing I'd like to add,
887 and this isn't, like, a call for, like, let's just try to
888 throw everything in there because we have to be very
889 thoughtful about what we include. But the other item that
890 I had offered was, are there other things within our -- our
891 data collection that we should be gathering? And so, that
892 might be a future agenda item we can have this winter. I
893 don't want to get sort of too far out there because, once
894 you start asking a lot of questions and, knowing that,
895 again, this is an attestation, you know, we don't want to
896 be administratively burdensome to either the employee or
897 the employer. So that's something to consider. The --
898 the, I think, piece around percentage, though, we can -- we
899 can have this winter. I mean, I think it's fine to say
900 winter, early spring.

901 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. But we'll see
902 what the folks -- what folks on the call -- what we all
903 figure out as far as meetings, and then kind of give you an
904 idea of -- or, get an idea for what month we can maybe
905 should for.

906 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay, great.

907 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Awesome. The other
908 thing, while I have you, you kind of mentioned it, and just
909 like, I think you said 25,000 possibly new folks coming
910 into, and is that a part of this Community First Choice
911 expansion kickoff?

912 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. Yep. Yeah.

913 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay.

914 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: So we can -- it also
915 probably would be, I think, a great opportunity for the
916 board and other folks who are listening to have my team
917 come and do a quick little presentation on what CFC is and
918 what it's hoping to accomplish, and I think the impacts
919 that it will have on direct care workers. I mean, we're
920 talking about really more flexibility for everyone,
921 regardless of age, disability type, you know, current
922 waiver, than we've ever seen before. So I think it's
923 really exciting, and I love that opportunity to tell people
924 what it -- what it will do.

925 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah, I was -- I was

926 thinking -- I was thinking the same thing, so --

927 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay.

928 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And then like first
929 quarter be okay, like, again depending on --

930 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah.

931 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- what everyone else
932 has to say. Okay.

933 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. No. I think -- I
934 don't -- like, I think we can maybe tentatively put that
935 for -- I'm assuming they can do February. We have some
936 folks going out on -- on leave, planned leave, so I just
937 need to check with their manager but, yeah, they give that
938 presentation a lot, so I think they'd be happy to come.

939 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. Yeah. That
940 would be helpful. I think that would be really helpful.
941 Thank you. Okay. And then just, I think -- it would
942 probably be helpful, and I think tracking and figuring out,
943 and we'll just kind of keep this on a -- on a -- on one of
944 our, you know, constants, I think, as an agenda item. You
945 know, we have the -- the session coming up, and so I think
946 tracking whatever's going on with the budget conversation,
947 as Colin said, it is a proposed budget that we got
948 legislators making some decisions. Ideally, they won't
949 make any decisions that will negatively impact, but I
950 think, you know, just having --making sure we keep that,

951 and then any other legislation that could be impacting this
952 workforce, we'll be, you know, bringing up in the agendas.
953 I think it'd be important, at least for, you know, during
954 the session, and then any results of that. The -- the
955 other thing that I wanted -- you know, Carrie, just help me
956 understand. You know, we did the hearings as a part of the
957 process to get to recommendations.

958 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes.

959 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: As we were having, as
960 -- you know, as -- as -- as -- as Joe and Don and Colin
961 were kind of having their conversation, it was really --
962 like, what it feels like would be helpful is to get some
963 insight, continued insight, as to, like, how these things
964 are impacting care workers. And so, I mean, you know,
965 looking to Colin as far as, again, it would happen on a
966 timeline. Right? So, like, what the -- what the impact,
967 let's say, of either some of -- of the minimum wage going
968 up in Denver, and then the reimbursement rate not going up.
969 I want -- you know, I'm really interested, like, what is
970 the real impact going to be? Right? Or -- and/or if there
971 are some realignments, right, coming out and when are those
972 going to hit, and then when would it be helpful for us also
973 to get some of the -- get some information from care
974 workers, those receiving care, and employers on how that's
975 impacting. Right? Like, real life kind of input. And so,

976 I do want to figure out, Carrie, do we have a budget to
977 have maybe even second half of the year or last quarter
978 going into 2026 hearings so that we can go out or have the
979 budget for, like, a survey at some point maybe again on the
980 same timeline, second half of the year, last quarter, going
981 into 2026, even if we don't have a recommendation process,
982 per se?

983 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: We might have to wait on
984 Eric. Eric might know a little bit better than me about
985 budget right now. I would say yes, but I am unsure. Is --
986 I think Eric is on the call, or at least I thought he was.

987 MR. ERIC YOHE: Yeah.

988

989 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: There he is.

990 MR. ERIC YOHE: Hello.

991 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: He's in San Francisco,
992 apparently.

993 MR. ERIC YOHE: That would be fantastic but, no,
994 I'm just in my little back of the kitchen office here in
995 Denver. But as far as I know, the -- we we will have but,
996 you know, this could change as things go through the JBC,
997 we should have the same \$85,000 budget that we had. We
998 have it this year, and we should in '25, '26, should have
999 that same budget for outreach expenses and to help support
1000 the board. I don't know that there's any intent for that

1001 to change.

1002 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. So why don't we
1003 do -- thank you so much, Eric. That's helpful. And we'll
1004 -- again, we'll have to continue to track that. Right?
1005 Like, what that is. So maybe one of the early agenda items
1006 in the first quarter for next year or one of our main, we
1007 did it this last year, first goals is, what is our outreach
1008 plan? Right? And, like, how do we -- what do we want it
1009 to look like. And then, obviously, if anything changes
1010 with your answer or with the budget --

1011 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Right.

1012 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- through the JBC,
1013 then we can adjust.

1014 MR. ERIC YOHE: Yeah.

1015 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So --

1016 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: That sounds great.

1017 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. All right. So
1018 we'll put that on, as well. Okay. Are there other big
1019 pieces or anything from this last round that folks want to
1020 make sure that we at least have as, hey, we need to figure
1021 out, you know, where we can get this on the budget and what
1022 resources we need or what -- you know, who else we need to
1023 bring in to provide information, et cetera, for next year?

1024 SANDRA: This is Sandy. I don't know what it
1025 would take to maybe see about helping the caregivers with,

1026 like, unemployment benefits when our hours are low. I'm
1027 trying to think of other options than just a raise, because
1028 when our hours drop, you know, we don't have a whole lot to
1029 fall back on. It's just a thought. I don't know what it
1030 takes to implement that or whatever, but it's an idea.

1031 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: You're -- you're
1032 talking about, is this -- is this -- help me understand,
1033 Sandra, because I've heard this in various kind of ways
1034 that it happens. Is it when there's a client that's no
1035 longer your client, or is it more --

1036 SANDRA: Correct.

1037 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- season- -- is it
1038 kind of -- what kind of ways is it happenin'?

1039 SANDRA: Within the last two weeks, I've had two
1040 clients pass away on me. So, right now, I'm down to 22
1041 hours a week, and the holidays are coming.

1042 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah.

1043 SANDRA: Okay. So this is just an idea of
1044 something else that we might be able to figure out --

1045 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Sandy, can I --

1046 SANDRA: -- to implement. Sure.

1047 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Can I -- so are you
1048 wondering if, like, could we create a resource or have a
1049 resource available for direct care workers to -- to show
1050 them how to file for UI if -- if they were in that

1051 situation and distribute --

1052 SANDRA: As far as I know, there's no benefits
1053 for us to boost us back up to 40 hours a week.

1054 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Okay, okay. You're talking
1055 about -- okay. I understand, though.

1056 SANDRA: See what I'm saying? I don't lose all
1057 of my clients at the same time, I've just lost two of 'em,
1058 and more income is needed. It's just a thought. I don't
1059 know how we would even go about doing something like that,
1060 because usually when somebody files for unemployment
1061 benefits, they've been laid off completely, where this
1062 isn't being laid off completely.

1063 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. Well, I wish I
1064 had -- I wish I had an answer.

1065 SANDRA: Yeah. It's something to think on. It's
1066 something to ponder on.

1067 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Well, where -- I'm
1068 gonna at least add it, and then we -- if we can figure out
1069 a way or maybe resources that we could bring in as a board
1070 to learn a little bit more about, you know, specifically,
1071 unemployment, get some ideas, because, you know, my brain
1072 is already going directly to, is there -- is there
1073 something we could do --

1074 SANDRA: A lot of different things, yeah.

1075 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: But just not -- yeah.

1076 Not being an unemployment attorney, I don't want to speak
1077 out of -- out of turn or -- yeah. I'm wondering if other
1078 states have done anything, right, in the -- in the care --

1079 SANDRA: Yeah. I'm --

1080 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Well --

1081 SANDRA: I'm not sure.

1082 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: And we can -- we can maybe
1083 reach out to someone in UI. I'm not sure, again, because
1084 that's a different division under CDLE. I don't know
1085 specifically what the rules or regulations are around that,
1086 but we can always try, like, if you guys need some sort of
1087 information or research and there's -- especially if it
1088 falls within our department, we can try and find somebody
1089 who can help address some of that, too.

1090 SANDRA: Yeah.

1091 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. I was thinking.
1092 Great. Thank you.

1093 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay. You're -- now your --
1094 now your sound is going out, Carrie.

1095 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Oh, no.

1096 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Popcorn popping. I
1097 don't know.

1098 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Oh, I'm sorry.

1099 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I'm sorry for you.

1100 That's -- yeah. Technology is frustrating at times. The

1101 other thing that we had had on the -- kind of the docket
1102 that we didn't really -- we weren't -- it was, one of the
1103 recommendations was around health care. And so, if folks
1104 are okay, I think, like, 2025 seems like a good year, since
1105 we haven't -- since there hasn't been a large, like, we
1106 want recommendations this year. It does seem like there's
1107 some work that we can do, and 2025 might be a good year to
1108 start bringing in some of those resources and start
1109 learning about more around health insurance that's
1110 provided, again, can we include it in our surveys or our
1111 outreach as far as the hearings? I believe -- I'm -- I'm
1112 not -- try not to quote the recommendation directly because
1113 I can't -- it's been a minute since I've read it, but it
1114 was essentially building out, like, a task -- like some
1115 research, right, and to figure out a path or options or,
1116 you know, other states might have had some options around
1117 how to tackle the -- the health insurance question for this
1118 workforce. So if folks are good with that, I'd like to put
1119 that on our 2025, and then figure out kind of some of the
1120 pieces, I think, you know, asking some folks here, getting
1121 some help from, you know, maybe outside the board, some --
1122 some experts in the -- in the field on how we could start
1123 to, you know, learn what possible ideas we could come out
1124 with, even if we don't come out with recommendations in
1125 2025. I think that was a big one around -- the question

1126 around health care. Any other kind of large goals, topics,
1127 we want to make sure -- and, again, this doesn't have to be
1128 the final list. Folks, you know, we can kind of think
1129 through them, as well, and then we'll have our first
1130 meeting, we'll set it up to take some additional thoughts
1131 and feedback around what we're going to be tackling next
1132 year.

1133 MS. JENNIFER OCHS: I would like to see something
1134 around backup care for clients.

1135 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah, yeah. Is that -
1136 - is that interchanged with respite, or is it -- are you
1137 seeing it as two different? You're back on mute, Jen.

1138 MS. JENNIFER OCHS: Yeah. I -- it's probably
1139 different than respite.

1140 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay.

1141 MS. JENNIFER OCHS: But, you know, if someone
1142 needs help and their caregiver is out for whatever reason,
1143 that would be their backup care anytime they're gone.

1144 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Backup care. Okay.
1145 Right. Thank you. It's very, very important. All right.
1146 Any other additions?

1147 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Steph, I think -- and they
1148 may just -- their computer night might not be working. I
1149 think both Katherine and Steve wanted a couple of
1150 assignments and topics to cover, just, you know, by the by.

1151 So if you wanna give them some stuff.

1152 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. I think we -- I
1153 think we lost Steve. Oh, no. Maybe he's on the next page.

1154 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: I was just joking, by the
1155 way.

1156 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Oh, there they are.
1157 Oh, you were?

1158 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah.

1159 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Well, Steve's not
1160 here, so we don't have to joke about, We can --

1161 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Oh, okay. Well, yeah, just
1162 give Dr. Cox something to do.

1163 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And then, Katherine,
1164 yeah, if you don't come off of mute, I think Colin just --

1165 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah.

1166 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- will volunteer you.

1167 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: See, Katherine, she wants a
1168 ton of assignments.

1169 MS. KATHERINE KEEGAN: Please, by all means.

1170 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I think we could
1171 probably actually arrange that. Just give us some time,
1172 Katherine, to -- to think --

1173 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: No. I'm just joking. But I
1174 do think the -- if we could start with the CFC thing, my
1175 team already responded to me, so they'd be ready to go in

1176 January even. So just let me know.

1177 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. That's helpful.
1178 All right. So then why don't we move to that? I don't
1179 know how to -- how to work the polls on Zoom and, you know,
1180 the technology is not my -- my friend. So I think it
1181 sounds like, you know, last time -- last year we met
1182 monthly just -- yeah, or I think -- maybe the two options
1183 are monthly, keep it the same or bimonth -- like, every
1184 other month since we're not tryin' to push recommendations.
1185 If we do monthly, I probably sounds like we could start in
1186 January and get, you know, a good -- a good number of
1187 meetings in, and then, you know, I think you're -- I think
1188 it was -- I think, Carrie, I didn't hear huge complaints
1189 about -- Fridays seem to be like a good day. And then we
1190 could just, like Carrie said, set it today. I was kind of
1191 at fault for a lot of that. My Fri- -- for some reason, my
1192 Fridays get crazy busy, but if it's set on my calendar, I
1193 won't be requesting any shifts in Fridays from the
1194 beginning. So I also agree, like, if we could get it set
1195 from now, it would be ideal. So I guess if there -- if
1196 there's any objection -- any preference to monthly versus
1197 every other month, speak -- speak now and we'll -- we'll
1198 make that the first kind of point of --

1199 MARY JO: You know, Steph, I think -- I think
1200 monthly because we're so new into this and we want to see

1201 so many changes. I think if we put it out longer, I think
1202 it's just going to take longer. You know what I'm sayin'?
1203 So I -- my suggestion would be monthly. Let's -- you know,
1204 we've got this board going strong right now. We're on a --
1205 on a roll and, you know, let's -- let's go with it. You
1206 know, we're already kind of seeing, you know, things being
1207 pushed back as it is. So I think if we get on this and
1208 keep goin' and truckin', I think we're doing the best we
1209 can do.

1210 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay.

1211 MS. CHRISTINA JACKSON: I will second that.

1212 MALE: Me, too.

1213 FEMALE: I agree with Mary Jo.

1214 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. Don,
1215 [inaudible].

1216 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah, I did want to come up.
1217 Monthly, two hours a month.

1218 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I mean, I would presume,
1219 yeah, it's the same amount. Right.

1220 MR. DON KNOX: Always by Zoom?

1221 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: No, no, no, no. We'll
1222 definitely still have in-person options available. We just
1223 did this this time, you know, because we're coming up on
1224 the holiday. Right? But Zoom will always be available
1225 regardless of what we do, so --

1226 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So --

1227 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Does Colin want to vote by

1228 email?

1229 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. He -- he -- he

1230 asked, yes. But let's go ahead and -- let's go ahead and

1231 see if there's strong opinions then, and if we need a vote,

1232 we can do it. We can do it following this by email, Colin,

1233 for sure, if we can't come to a --

1234 MR. DON KNOX: I did want to ask a question.

1235 When we started last year, did we start it monthly or every

1236 other month?

1237 SANDRA: Monthly.

1238 MR. DON KNOX: Was it monthly from the very

1239 beginning?

1240 SANDRA: Mm-hmm.

1241 MR. DON KNOX: Okay.

1242 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. We met once in the

1243 first quarter, and then after that, it was monthly,

1244 partially because of the deadlines that were imposed, so --

1245 MR. DON KNOX: And then, Stephanie, are you thinking we are

1246 going to do a recommendation in September or we're not

1247 gonna do a recommendation in September for 2025?

1248 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I don't -- I mean, I'd

1249 like to have that conversation a little bit further at the

1250 beginning of the year with folks. As of now, though, I'm -

1251 - we could or we couldn't. Right? I think it's up to
1252 folks on the board if we -- if there are, you know, big
1253 things that we really want to, like, zero in on and have a
1254 -- at this point -- honestly, Don, if we -- the thing that
1255 I'm seeing is around health care and I don't think -- I
1256 don't know if we're ready in nine months to -- on health
1257 care to have --

1258 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah.

1259 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- any sort of, you
1260 know -- so I'm leaning no, but I don't want to take any --

1261 MR. DON KNOX: Yeah.

1262 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- away from folks on
1263 the board who might want to put something out.

1264 MR. DON KNOX: Well, I don't -- I don't want to,
1265 you know -- to me, you know, if we're having something
1266 we're working towards and we want to -- you know, I'm not a
1267 -- I can meet -- I can meet monthly. It's kind of a heavy
1268 lift, but the -- but if we're not gonna issue a report,
1269 that would be a reason to meet less. If we are going to
1270 issue a report, that would be a reason to maybe meet
1271 monthly.

1272 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah.

1273 MR. DON KNOX: And -- and what I would -- and we
1274 don't have the two new board members. They might have
1275 opinions, as well, but I'm -- I'm not opposed to meeting

1276 monthly. These are hard issues that we're up against
1277 because, I mean, we just heard earlier reimbursement is
1278 flat and rate -- and -- and minimum wage is going up, and
1279 so, putting a test on agencies.

1280 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah.

1281 MR. DON KNOX: And we're -- you know, we're going
1282 the wrong -- we all -- I think we're all working for, you
1283 know, we want to get the -- the base wage higher, and we
1284 wanna -- but the only way to do that is to get -- the
1285 primary ways to get reimbursement higher. We want to get
1286 the benefits better, but the primary way to do that is to
1287 get the reimbursement higher, because it has to come out of
1288 somewhere. Like, we're -- we want to -- we're all -- we're
1289 all wanting to increase -- improve everything.

1290 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah.

1291 MR. DON KNOX: But the -- but the budget is a
1292 huge challenge. So with that, it's like, well, what is
1293 there to talk about on wages? And I mean, we have to be
1294 really creative. Right? There's got to be -- because it's
1295 not coming out of reimbursement, so where -- where would it
1296 be coming from? And to the point about, you know -- you
1297 know, clearly, we're going to have to be super creative.
1298 And I don't -- I don't know -- you know, I don't know if
1299 that's an argument for more meetings or fewer meetings but
1300 -- but I -- I can do the two hours a month if that's the

1301 way the majority goes.

1302 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: And -- and it could be that
1303 you guys go ahead and schedule it monthly, and there's just
1304 going to be an understanding that maybe not everyone is
1305 going to be able to attend every single time, but if
1306 there's something important to vote on, that should
1307 probably be clearly communicated. So, I mean, I think
1308 that's fair because, I mean, the minimum for you guys is
1309 once quarterly. So, I mean, it's just up to you guys how
1310 you want to do that.

1311 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So it's been -- it's
1312 been, I think, voiced by quite a few folks and an
1313 agreement, or, you know, yeah, an agreement from a few
1314 others. Can we say -- to that point, Don, also, we could
1315 start monthly and identify if something happens in the --
1316 in the -- in the legislative session or, you know, if we
1317 can -- if we identify anything out of some of these initial
1318 presentations, some of this data that we're getting, that
1319 we want to continue meeting monthly and that we want to
1320 push for something, or we could say, this has been a really
1321 great three months. We've learned a lot. There's a lot
1322 happening. We kind of know where we're at with the budget.
1323 Let's move to every-other month and know that this is going
1324 to be the one topic or three topics that we really want to
1325 concentrate on for the rest of the year and this is our

1326 goal. When I saw goal on the agenda, I was like, oh, it's
1327 hard to, you know, set goals for next year with, I think,
1328 so many pieces and, you know, some so much kind of
1329 happening to -- to the other point. Right? It's a lot.
1330 There's just a lot of pieces. And so, if we can get the
1331 monthly second Friday of the month for the two hours on
1332 everybody's calendar, just like last time. If we -- if we
1333 take it down, it's a lot easier than putting it back up on
1334 people's calendars, and so folks can kind of plan for that.
1335 The -- the two newly-appointed board members can account
1336 for that, as well, and let Carrie know, you know, if
1337 there's going to be an issue there for them but -- and I
1338 also agree with Carrie, like, we were on a very tight
1339 timeline last time. I think, you know, if somebody needs
1340 to miss a meeting this time, it might not be a vote, right,
1341 happening every every month or, you know, some deciding
1342 factor happening every month the way that last -- last
1343 round worked for us because of our short time together. Is
1344 that -- so what I'm proposing is, we put it on the calendar
1345 for a monthly meeting, second Friday of the month. 12:00
1346 to 2:00 is that --

1347 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1348 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- better, Carrie?

1349

1350 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yep.

1351 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And at this point,
1352 I'll say, if there's any objections, please share
1353 objections. If not --

1354 MR. DON KNOX: So yeah. The point -- I just want
1355 to make one more point. So I'm a nonprofit executive.
1356 Joe, you're an agency owner. Does that put any burden to
1357 you?

1358 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: It's -- it's a burden, but I
1359 was wondering if, on the sort of similar topic that Colin
1360 was mentioning, you know, maybe a vote also on -- on a few
1361 -- just to kind of help us get started for the year. Are
1362 we going to issue a recommendation? You know, having
1363 everybody vote to kind of set -- set things a particular
1364 direction, so we -- so we know. I think it's -- it could
1365 be -- you know, I don't want us to get to February when
1366 some people are under the impression that, well, oh, yes,
1367 like, this is just conversation, and then others are
1368 thinking, well, I thought we were going towards a
1369 recommendation and that's why we're meeting this often. I
1370 don't know. I sort of feel like just getting a -- getting
1371 a little census of, hey, recommendation, yes or no, a
1372 number of other things, you know, top priorities, is this a
1373 priority, yes or no? And I'm sure --

1374 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So like a board survey
1375 for January. Is that where you're --

1376 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah, maybe something like --
1377 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: For our first meeting.
1378 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: Yeah. And that way, like, hey,
1379 here's -- here's how we're feeling about things and the
1380 amount of time we have. I know the month -- the monthly
1381 meetings, like Don said, it's -- it's a bit of a lift, but
1382 if we're also -- if it's a little less of, hey, everybody
1383 is -- we need 100 percent attendance. I also just don't
1384 want it to turn into kind of a grab bag each time of, you
1385 know, who will be -- who will make it this time, and then
1386 so we end up with, you know, some people catching up on
1387 last month. I feel like just a little survey would be
1388 helpful, and then we can either confirm the -- you know,
1389 like we're saying, every month and move forward with that,
1390 or if we have to adjust the timeline a little bit or adjust
1391 the schedule, we can at that point, because if everybody is
1392 like, look, let's -- let's do the recommendations, then,
1393 you know, we'll feel good about our schedule. We can
1394 schedule around that. And if everybody says no, then we
1395 can think about, all right, you know, what are our
1396 objectives alternatively.

1397 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I mean, I can probably come
1398 up with some form of a Google survey or poll for you all.
1399 And what I might do then, if I'm gonna do that, is probably
1400 wait until we have the new board members, so that should be

1401 pretty soon. And so, maybe I send something out sometime
1402 between now and January. Does that sound good, Stephanie?

1403 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I was actually gonna
1404 put it out there, if we could have our first meeting in
1405 February, because I know the holidays and the session
1406 starting like right at the beginning of the -- of January
1407 is difficult for a lot of folks, especially our state
1408 folks.

1409 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Sure.

1410 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So, yeah, Carrie, if
1411 you can put that on there. Again, Joe, I understand that.
1412 It sounds a little bit also to me, like, should I show up
1413 if we're going to do recommendations? If not, I'm going to
1414 choose whether or not to show up or not. I'm being honest
1415 there. So I don't want that to become the -- the, you know
1416 -- the feel like, if we -- if we, you know, decide on no
1417 recommendations because, again, I think the survey is fine,
1418 but if we get to -- this is -- this is the situation that
1419 I'm thinking of, Joe. Something goes shitty in the budget
1420 process and this board says, hey, we need to -- we need to,
1421 like, come out strong and we want -- now we need to put
1422 recommendations forward around base wage, around some --
1423 you know, so that we can speak to the JBC for 2026, like, I
1424 would want us to be able to, you know, be, I want to say
1425 flexible, but we should have that option as a board.

1426 Right? And that decision might not actually get made until
1427 some of the other pieces fall. And I also respect that
1428 everybody here -- you know, I know some of the -- Sandra,
1429 you said you had two clients pass away, and you have
1430 others. Like, that's a lot of clients, right? Like, so
1431 folks are really, I think, across the board, whether you
1432 own a business or whether you run an organization or
1433 whether you have multiple clients or, you know, are
1434 receiving care and you have your own, you know, daily
1435 schedule and responsibilities, like, I -- I respect
1436 everybody's time, equally and I -- I want to -- I want us
1437 to also not take away from, like, if it's not a
1438 recommendation year, that, I think, Don, you said it,
1439 things are important. There's lots of happening -- there's
1440 lots happening. And Jen said it as well, like, and there's
1441 -- there's just so much work that we can do, even if in
1442 September we don't have to, like, have a vote and send
1443 something to the -- to the Governor's desk. So, Carrie, if
1444 you could help us with that. I'm happy to help, as well --

1445 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Sure.

1446 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- with some of the
1447 pieces. And then, I can -- we can add the -- the topics
1448 that we've already kind of collected today, and then ask
1449 for some feedback on more of the -- more of the --

1450 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Should we just plan -- okay.

1451 So it sounds like you wanted to meet next in February. So
1452 we -- can we go ahead and plan for that February second
1453 Friday -- this time, and then I'll go ahead and do the
1454 survey in the meantime, and then after that, we can kinda
1455 figure it out.

1456 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: That could be our
1457 first quarter --

1458 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1459 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- for sure.

1460 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1461 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. Thank you,
1462 thank you. Okay. And then you mind if I just -- so okay.
1463 We'll go on to the second -- or, to the last addenda item,
1464 which is reviewing the --

1465 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1466 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: What are we calling
1467 it? The --

1468 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: It's a -- it's basically
1469 like a posting notice.

1470 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay.

1471 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Let me see. Hold on.

1472 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So just to give some -
1473 -I also shared one --

1474 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: There you go.

1475 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- with you. It kind

1476 of had like an introduct- -- mainly the one that I had
1477 shared was like an introduction, and then all the pieces
1478 that were not there is everything that you laid out. So if
1479 you want to talk through this as far as, like, the
1480 requirement and then what you all were thinking and we can
1481 --

1482 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Right.

1483 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Thank you.

1484 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: So what I'm sharing here is
1485 sort of a draft. So our division does posting notices
1486 pretty frequently, and it basically just has all of these
1487 little sections kind of showing what your rights are, what
1488 the requirements are. And I sent you all an email previous
1489 to this. This information is an Article 8 -- 8-7.5-105.
1490 And so what that says is that there's a notice to direct
1491 care workers that the board has to provide a template for
1492 and that CDLE and HCBS and CDPHE will post on their
1493 respective public facing websites. I can quote it to you,
1494 but I don't know. It says, basically, each direct care
1495 employer shall annually provide a notice to direct care
1496 workers employed by the direct care employer informing the
1497 direct care workers of the following. So the first thing
1498 is the rights of direct care workers and the obligations
1499 the direct care employers provided under Article 8 -- or,
1500 article 7.5, including their rights to participate in

1501 public hearings that the board conducts and to provide
1502 written or oral -- oral testimony to the board. And then
1503 number two is all current minimum direct care employment
1504 standards. So that's things like the minimum wage, that's
1505 the direct care base wage rates, and any local jurisdiction
1506 minimum direct care employment standards. And three, the
1507 contact information for and a statement that the direct
1508 care worker may contact the department for assistance and
1509 information regarding the rights and obligations under this
1510 Article 7.5 and any standards described in subsection. So
1511 what I've done is put on this draft our contact
1512 information. If you -- I'll -- I'll scroll down and show
1513 you in just a second. So if you go down, we have, like,
1514 wage and hour. We have paid sick leave. We have
1515 information about family. What we're gonna plan on doing
1516 is put a QR code on the poster. And what that will do is
1517 direct to, you know, our various infos about these specific
1518 topics or other relevant information. We have one about
1519 employee classification, pay equity. So that is -- pay
1520 equity specifically outlines, sorry, within the rules here
1521 as well. It does say, the board shall make available to
1522 direct care employers a template or sample notice that
1523 satisfies the requirements of this section and rules
1524 adopted by the Department pursuant to this Title 8
1525 regarding other required employer notices pertaining to

1526 wages, pay equity, labor conditions, and family and medical
1527 leave benefits. And so, that's what I've tried to include
1528 on this draft, are all those elements. So we have the pay
1529 equity. We have family. We have the direct care worker
1530 right to participate in public hearings, slash, it's sort
1531 of a prevention of retaliation by the employer. And then
1532 we have also the Department of Labor contact information.
1533 So this is not pretty. This is not what we would normally,
1534 like, put together. I mean, we try and shorten it down,
1535 probably at least to two pages. Our division director,
1536 Scott, is really great at that. He's -- he's good at
1537 cramming a lot of information on one page. But anyway, so
1538 that's kind of what we have. And so, that's kind of what I
1539 wanted you guys to look at, because that's typically what,
1540 like, notices provided to employers look like. But let's
1541 see. I can also share the draft notice that you have,
1542 Stephanie. Is that what you want me to do?

1543 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. I think it was
1544 just like the intro to it, and then --

1545 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay.

1546 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: There was -- I was
1547 also thinking, and I think it would be helpful, Carrie, if
1548 --

1549 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Mm-hmm.

1550 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- because this is in

1551 connection with the board. Right? So, like, tying it to
1552 the board's work, and I just have on there, and folks need
1553 to decide if they're okay with it having who the board is
1554 on there. And then in the -- in the red is essentially
1555 what you had. So I think, like, those pieces.

1556 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. Well,
1557 typically, with, like, posting notices, we have to get as
1558 much information on them as we can. So what we might do,
1559 and maybe we can discuss this with you, too, is, like, you
1560 know, have a QR code that connects directly to the direct
1561 care page where -- because we already have, like, your
1562 contact -- the board's contact information there. But we
1563 can discuss it, too. But the main thing is we need these
1564 specific components as outlined in the legislation that are
1565 on -- on that post about us.

1566 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. So then maybe
1567 we could do similar -- let's get some feedback, as well,
1568 but I'm thinking just as far as, like, structure we can,
1569 like, narrow this down, like, the wording of it, right, if
1570 people --

1571 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1572 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- wants to wordsmith,
1573 you know, if somebody loves that, feel free to help us to,
1574 like, maybe one paragraph, all of that work, and then the
1575 link, I think that works.

1576 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay.

1577 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: But, yeah, we -- you
1578 can open it up. if you would like, for folks to --

1579 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay. Is it not showing,
1580 the -- your --

1581 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I'm sorry. Like, open
1582 it if folks have questions or --

1583 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Oh, gotcha, gotcha.

1584 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah.

1585 MR. DON KNOX: Hey, I do have a question. This
1586 is Done. When does this have to be approved by?

1587 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: So it -- the posting notice
1588 -- employers are required to post this starting January 1,
1589 2025.

1590 MR. DON KNOX: January 1. Do we have to decide
1591 today?

1592 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I would say no, but I will
1593 put a deadline on your guys' feedback simply because we
1594 will have to have it posted on our websites. So as it said
1595 in the legislation, you know, we have to have it posted,
1596 HCBS has to have it posted, and so does CDPHE.

1597 MR. DON KNOX: Okay.

1598 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Maybe you can share
1599 this as part of the -- like, the vote? Like, [inaudible]?

1600 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Maybe. I think I would

1601 separate those out simply because we're still waiting on --
1602 I still have to wait on the applicants, and the -- the
1603 survey thing is gonna be separate.

1604 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Oh, the survey's gonna
1605 be separate, yeah.

1606 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, yeah.

1607 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And you'll give us a
1608 deadline on this.

1609 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1610 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: You'll share out kind
1611 of the final version, just like we did with the
1612 recommendations, and then we will --

1613 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1614 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- vote on the rest of
1615 the year.

1616 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. I think that's great.
1617 Eric, do you have somethin' to say?

1618 MR. ERIC YOHE: I will just note that employers
1619 starting January 1st are required to provide a notice with
1620 that information. There's actually no deadline for the
1621 board to provide a template or sample notice. You know,
1622 this is something that we noticed this fall. I know we
1623 noticed it when it was going through the legislature. So
1624 we'll -- but we'll take some responsibility for the fact
1625 that we're just now bringing this to you. I am not -- I'm

1626 not concerned because we are the enforcement mechanism for
1627 the employers providing those notices. I'm not concerned
1628 if we don't finalize a poster until sometime in January.
1629 At this point, it probably is unrealistic to have something
1630 finalized and posted and sent to the various agencies by
1631 the end of the year.

1632 MR. DON KNOX: Eric, this is Don. Is the -- was
1633 this required by the direct care workforce legislation?

1634 MR. ERIC YOHE: Yeah. 8 -- 87.5 105.

1635 MR. DON KNOX: And if I understand what you're
1636 saying, this is a -- this is a recommended notice, but an
1637 employer, if they wanted to design their own, they could.

1638 MR. ERIC YOHE: That's correct.

1639 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Correct.

1640 MR. DON KNOX: As long -- as long as it included
1641 these elements.

1642 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Correct.

1643 MR. ERIC YOHE: Yes.

1644 MR. DON KNOX: Okay. All right. Not that I
1645 would encourage --

1646 MR. ERIC YOHE: If you want to --

1647 MR. DON KNOX: -- to not use -- yes. But I just
1648 want to make sure that I understood what you said. Thank
1649 you, Eric.

1650 MR. ERIC YOHE: Of course.

1651 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: You -- can go back to
1652 the, um, spreadsheet kind of one?

1653 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1654 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And then, to other
1655 folks, is this, like -- are folks seeing anything to add or
1656 any questions about the posting?

1657 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: And I did email it to you
1658 all for your ease because I know it's hard to -- since it's
1659 just coming from my screen -- my screen to kind of, you
1660 know, scroll through it. But is there any piece that you
1661 all would like to talk about? There's the wage and hour
1662 piece that's got, like, minimum wage, overtime, breaks,
1663 paid sick leave, family leave, employee classification, pay
1664 equity, and then again, direct care worker right to
1665 participate in public hearings, retaliation, and then just
1666 our contact information.

1667 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: This is a very small point, but
1668 on the 10-minute rest breaks, what was -- did it say how
1669 often it could be taken, just -- just in the interest of --
1670 or maybe it just said, see full text elsewhere?

1671 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. It does say -- yeah.
1672 When we're tryin' to cram this much information into one
1673 little page, that's usually what we do.

1674 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: No worries.

1675 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: So we have a, for details

1676 see the comps order poster. And what we've been doing is,
1677 we've been putting QR codes on our notices, so you can just
1678 hit the QR code. We haven't -- don't have that designed
1679 right now, but we can.

1680 MR. JOE SHIPEE: Okay. No. That's great.
1681 Great. Thank you.

1682 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. I did want to note in
1683 that section, too, there are some direct care exceptions
1684 for certain overtime rules and break time rules. I did
1685 specifically cite on there which comps rules those were,
1686 and so you can reference them if you want to go look at
1687 comps, the actual order, the actual rule. So --

1688 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: The travel time came
1689 up quite a bit, Carrie.

1690 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. I mean, that's
1691 something that we can add. It's not something that was
1692 specifically outlined, but if you would like for us to add,
1693 like, some section on time worked, because travel time
1694 falls under time worked. The time works definition --
1695 okay.

1696 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: -- we can -- we can do that.

1697 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: I mean, it -- I heard
1698 it a lot, but I'm -- if others have strong opinions, too.
1699 Like, do folks think it would be helpful, those in the
1700 industry?

1701 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I mean, we've also heard
1702 that, as well. So, I mean, it might be something worth
1703 adding. I don't know. Eric, do you have -- or, sorry, I
1704 think I interrupted someone.

1705 MS. JENNIFER OCHS: Just to clarify, it's time
1706 travel between client work?

1707 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. Usually, that's what
1708 we're talking about when we're talking about time worked,
1709 or as it relates to direct care, sometimes there's
1710 confusion around what constitutes travel time or time
1711 worked -- rather, time worked.

1712 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. Yeah. If you
1713 could, that would be great, hearing no objection. Thank
1714 you.

1715 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay. Great.

1716 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Jen, were you gonna
1717 jump in again?

1718 MS. JENNIFER OUCHS: No. Thank you.

1719 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: So -- sorry. Do you
1720 want to remind us just, like, how we're gonna be asked to
1721 do, like, a --

1722 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: To vote on this?

1723 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yeah. [Inaudible]

1724 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: First this -- so I've
1725 already allowed you all access to comment on the document

1726 itself. So if you guys want to take some time to comment
1727 on it, like, if there need to be changes or you want
1728 something else, go ahead and do that. I'll go ahead and
1729 give you a deadline. I don't know. What seems fair?
1730 Let's see. Maybe a couple weeks from now. I don't want to
1731 give too much time, and we're in the holiday seasons, and I
1732 don't want to give not enough time. Maybe the 10th? Does
1733 that sound good to everyone? December 10th, or is that --

1734 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: That sounds good.

1735 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Okay.

1736 PARTICIPANT: Sounds good to me.

1737 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: And what I'll do is, I'll
1738 just send out an email and make sure and verify that
1739 everyone's commented, and we'll try and take your comments
1740 into account, and then fix it up and re-send it out. And
1741 as long as everybody's good with the final version, that is
1742 probably what we'll do. If there's not any, like, major
1743 comments or anything, we may just go ahead and change it
1744 and, you know, assume that all as well.

1745 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. Yep. Thanks
1746 for getting that together.

1747 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, definitely. Okay. I
1748 can stop sharing.

1749 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Anybody has issues,
1750 I'm not sure if everybody's tried to access, just let

1751 Carrie know if you have any issues accessing that document.

1752 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. Just let me know.

1753 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. All right. So
1754 Carrie is going to -- I'm just going to review everything
1755 that's coming out for us to be on the lookout. Carrie,
1756 you're gonna let us know about the appointments for the two
1757 employer seats.

1758 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Mm-hmm.

1759 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: And then our first
1760 meeting is gonna be February -- now I lost the date.

1761 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Let's see. It should be the
1762 second Friday. Let me look. Hold on a second.

1763 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: February 14th.

1764 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Let's see. Yeah, that looks
1765 right, February 14th.

1766 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.,
1767 and then --

1768 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1769 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. So we'll get a
1770 calendar invite for that. Is that right?

1771 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes, yes. That's correct.

1772 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. So we get
1773 to bring each other Valentine's, if you'd like. We're
1774 gonna be in person. And then, you're gonna send out two --
1775 you're gonna be working on two pieces that we need to make

1776 sure that we are engaged in.

1777 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes.

1778 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: The first being this
1779 -- this posting you're going to give us until December
1780 10th.

1781 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes.

1782 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Give feedback or
1783 suggested edits. And if I -- correct me if I have this
1784 wrong. If there's no -- nothing major, it will be just
1785 sent out. If there are major pieces, you're gonna ask us
1786 to approve, or did I --

1787 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes, yes. That's correct.

1788 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. So make sure
1789 you get your feedback in. If you don't, no -- no complaint
1790 later that you didn't have a say. So that's on us. And
1791 then you're gonna help us by working on a survey for what
1792 our calendar looks like for next year.

1793 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1794 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Included in that some
1795 of the areas of discussion, goals, concentration.

1796 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes. That's our aim, and
1797 I'll go out to a little bit later, simply because we're not
1798 going to be meeting until February anyway.

1799 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Yep.

1800 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: I may not send that out

1801 'til, like, maybe December, January, somewhere in there.

1802 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. That sounds
1803 good. And then, of course, I can help out with that in any
1804 way.

1805 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah, yeah.

1806 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Share -- share all the
1807 -- I'm sure you take your own notes --

1808 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah.

1809 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: -- but we have some
1810 kind of buckets of work and some commitment from HCBS on
1811 presentations, et cetera.

1812 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yes.

1813 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Okay. All right. Is
1814 there anything else folks want to raise? Any new business,
1815 per se? If not, I think we can --

1816 MR. JOE SHIPPEE: I just wanted to -- to echo --
1817 Don was mentioning about the need for a creativity here,
1818 too. Like, I would love to think of if there's any way,
1819 you know, at our next meeting, you know, like -- like,
1820 Sandra mentioned the point about unemployment and, you
1821 know, how to handle that situation, that I feel like
1822 there's a lot of -- we might have been a little bit fixated
1823 in the past on pay rates, you know, caregiver rates,
1824 reimbursement rates, all that. But, again, to Don's point,
1825 I think the importance of creativity here is going to be

1826 essential and, you know, maybe if each -- if there's a pain
1827 point in particular for everybody, you know, anyone -- any
1828 one of us that we deal with, that if we can maybe dig a
1829 little deeper into that and say, hey, you know, is there
1830 something -- something I could bring up at the February
1831 board meeting simpler than just, you know, than just
1832 bringing it back to the rate conversation, that might be a
1833 great -- a great place to start at the next meeting. Just,
1834 you know -- just trying to run with some takeaways from --
1835 from today's. I know I'm gonna try and -- try and, you
1836 know, sharpen the pencil and think about some -- some new
1837 creative, you know, slightly different things maybe that
1838 weren't talked about last year, or maybe come at a problem
1839 from before, trying to think of a different angle on
1840 things, just -- just an idea for next time.

1841 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right. Anyone
1842 else? Okay. And just a reminder, we are gonna have the
1843 Community First Choice presentation in February. Colin, if
1844 you're still on, that's the February. I know you had
1845 checked in on January, so we appreciate you doing that.
1846 I'm sure lots of questions and conversations will come up
1847 around that expansion and just opportunities there.

1848 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Yeah. We'll -- we will have
1849 someone there, and if I absolutely cannot work, I will let
1850 you guys know in the next week or so.

1851 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: Perfect. All right.
1852 Thank you so much.
1853 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Great.
1854 MS. STEPHANIE FELIX-SOWY: All right, everybody.
1855 I hope you have a good holiday week, if you celebrate,
1856 great holiday. And we'll see you all in February. And
1857 thanks, Carrie and Eric.
1858 MS. CARRIE CHESNEY: Yeah. Thank you.
1859 MR. COLIN LAUGHLIN: Thank you.
1860 MR. DON KNOX: Thanks, guys. Bye.
1861 PARTICIPANTS: Bye. Happy holidays.

1862 STATE OF COLORADO)

1863 CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER)

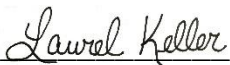
1864 I hereby certify that the above and foregoing
1865 constitutes a transcript of all the audible testimony taken
1866 at a hearing in Denver, Colorado, on November 22, 2024, in
1867 the matter of DIRECT CARE STABILIZATION BOARD MEETING,
1868 which hearing was digitally recorded by the State of
1869 Colorado and transcribed by me to the best of my ability.

1870 Dated at Wellington, Ohio, this 13th of February,
1871 2025.

1872

1873

1874



1875

Laurel Keller

1876

Transcriptionist

1877

Ditto Transcripts

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