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May 15, 2024

Hon. Marvin Abney, Chairman
Committee on Finance
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for House Bill 7298 "Medicaid Home Care Rate Increases"

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Bethany Leclerc. I am almost 40 years old, and I have been a CNA for about 15 years. I have been doing home care with Bayada for 13 of those years. I absolutely love my job. I think it's very rewarding work. I love doing home care so much because I can give my clients the one-on-one attention that they need, and most importantly, that they deserve. I think we are extremely underpaid. As much as I love what I do, it isn't always sunshine and roses.

There are a lot of tuff times, dirty times, some things we do in our everyday life, a lot of people could never do. But we go to work every day with a smile on our face and we do what needs to be done for our clients. I am a single mother of 4 kids. I get maybe \$200 a month for help through their fathers. I bust my behind to support them. I am barely paying my mortgage. Never mind all the other necessities in life. Never mind throwing in the usual kids sick, missing a day here and there.

Everything in this world is going up except for our pay. Bayada, for the last 13 years I have worked with Bayada I have had very little pay increase. When I started, I dropped in pay from where I was. Then after a few years being with Bayada, I again had a pay decrease because of all the Healthcare issues. It's not fair. I know people who work at McDonald's, Dollar General, and drive buses, that all make more than I do.

I have repeatedly thought about going to work there. With the struggles I have, why not? I went to school to do this. I put in a lot of effort, and to make less than almost everyone else. I don't understand. Everyone needs to think about what if your mom or dad was sick? What is they needed us? A good caregiver is hard to find.

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The pay rate for CNAs really needs to be reevaluated. We deserve to not struggle. I shouldn't have to struggle with choosing to be at home with my kids some or working so much I never see them. We care for people's loved ones every day.

I put everything into my clients. Being reasonably paid by insurance or whoever, should not be something we have to fight like this for. Our families and we should be thought about more.

I really hope something changes here. For every single CNA out there. We do the work so many people won't and/or can't. And I for one love it.

Bethany Leclerc