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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 Melissa Leveillee and I've been a CNA for 14 years. I've worked mainly in home care, but I've also worked at different facilities. Home care has given me the flexibility to work an appropriate schedule while raising my young children. I do supplement my income with another job that pays more, a few hours a week.

I overall find my job as a home care CNA to be very rewarding. I take pride in assisting my clients with their individual needs. Those needs can be great, but certain clients require more mental and physical stamina on my end. With the rising inflation in our country, it's depressing to visit the grocery store.

It's also frustrating to hear the cashiers in many of those markets are being paid a rate very similar to mine as a CNA. There's nothing wrong with being a cashier, as it is honest work, but as a CNA, I had to complete an education training program, get licensed, pay to renew my CNA license on yearly basis, and complete the required in service training annually.

In my opinion, my job is more mentally and physically taxing. What I do daily as a CNA is valuable and makes a big difference in my client's lives. With a change to Medicaid policies, it's my wish to see a pay increase for all home care CNAs in the State of Rhode Island. With a higher pay rate, there should be a decrease in the home care CNA shortage.