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Apr 29, 2025

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chairman

Committee on Finance
House of Representatives
State of Rhode Island
82 Smith Street, Room 35
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Abney,

My name is Eva Nunez, and I am a Certified Nursing Assistant and the Staffing Coordinator at Good Shepherd Home Care. I've worked in both roles — on the floor caring for patients, and behind the desk making sure every client receives the care they need. It's not always easy, but I believe in this work because I've lived it from every side.

I became a CNA because I wanted to help people. But I quickly learned that no matter how hard we work, many caregivers still feel invisible — to the system, to the funding structures, and sometimes even to the public. The work is demanding, personal, and sacred. And it's often done for wages that barely cover our own needs.

Now as a staffing coordinator, I see the challenges from a different view. I see CNAs and homemakers trying to give their best while juggling their own families, side jobs,

and rising costs. I speak with them every day, and I can tell you: many are tired — not of the work, but of being underpaid and overlooked.

That's why I'm writing to ask you to support **House Bill 5774** and **Senate Bill 255** in the FY2026 budget. The **Medicaid rate floor** and the **\$1.56/hour behavioral health wage enhancement** are not luxuries. They are the tools we need to keep this system functioning — to retain trained workers, to offer clients consistent care, and to show respect for those of us who are always the first to show up.

The workers we staff are the ones who sit with someone's mother, help someone's father get out of bed, bring dignity to people in their most vulnerable hours. These are not replaceable tasks. These are the heart of home care.

Please help us protect this workforce. Please include House Bill 5774 in the 2026 budget and preserve the wage for Behavioral Health enhancement. Our caregivers deserve more than words — they deserve action.

With gratitude,

Eva Nunez, CNA

X 
Staffing Coordinator
Good Shepherd Home Care