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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 Melissa Moquete, and I serve as the Human Resources Representative at Good Shepherd Home Care. I'm responsible for hiring, onboarding, and retaining the caregivers who provide hands-on care to some of Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents. I've read their applications. I've sat with them during interviews. I've listened as they shared not just their work history — but their heart.

I can say with certainty: no one chooses this work casually. The CNAs and homemakers we employ are driven by compassion, resilience, and an incredible sense of duty. But I also hear their fear — fear that no matter how hard they work, the support they've been promised could be taken away. When talk of rate reductions or cuts to wage enhancements surface, they're left wondering how they'll continue supporting their families while still showing up for the families they serve.

That's why I'm writing to urge you to support **House Bill 5774** and **Senate Bill 255** in the FY2026 state budget. These bills are critical to keeping home care workers employed, motivated, and protected.

The **Medicaid rate floor** would shield providers from being undercut by managed care organizations, which directly impacts how we compensate our staff. And the **\$1.56/hour behavioral health wage enhancement**? It's more than a line item — it's a promise that when our workers pursue higher-level training to care for clients with Alzheimer's, depression, and other complex needs, the state will meet their effort with respect and reward.

Without these measures, it becomes harder — if not impossible — to recruit and retain talent. We lose seasoned caregivers to other industries. We lose stability in care. And the system starts to fail from the inside out.

Please help us keep our workforce intact. Please stand with the people who do the quiet, crucial labor of care. I urge you to include House Bill 5774 and Senate Bill 255 in the FY2026 budget. It's not just a policy decision — it's a show of faith in the people holding Rhode Island's care system together.

With respect and hope,

x Melissa Moquete

Human Resources Representative
Good Shepherd Home Care