

Testimony of Ina Haase
Certified Nursing Assistant
Member, New England Health Care Employees Union, District 1199, SEIU Healthcare
Before the Human Services Committee, supporting Bill No. 5072:
An Act Concerning Appropriations to Improve Nurse Staffing Ratios

Good morning, everyone. My name is Ina Haase, I live and also work in Windsor. I'm a Certified Nursing Assistant at Alexandria Manor, which is a skilled nursing home in. I've been at this for nineteen years, so I speak from experience today when I tell you that nursing home residents and nursing home workers need more staff to give quality care. That's why I'm asking for your support for Bill 5072.

Our residents need our time and right now we can't give it to them. I work on the first shift and I have regularly have nine residents on my shift. They are mostly bedridden or confined to a wheelchair. In the morning it's wash and run, wash and run, one right after the other. I don't take breaks; I barely get lunch.

Sometimes I would like to sit for a few minutes with my residents, because many of them have no family or regular visitors. Maybe they have a newspaper or a postcard - I'd like to read it to them, but there's no time, I can't stop. Just five or ten minutes a day extra would make a big difference in their lives - and mine. It breaks my heart that I can't find that few minutes to spare for the so-called "little things" that make a big difference.

Quality care also means having time to help people walk so they can stay mobile as long as possible, or recover from surgery or a joint replacement. But I have to squeeze that kind of care in the afternoon,

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because people need to be washed and fed and dressed in the morning. Eight of the nine people I'm taking care of every day need total care – assistance with just about everything. They need care more frequently than I can give it to them for their comfort and dignity.

That's just not right. That's just not fair – to them or to me. Help me give the right kind of care whenever it's needed. Support Bill 5072, which will increase staffing in our nursing homes and set reasonable minimum ratios.

We'll all be old soon enough – let's do the right thing now. Thank you.