

6668

*Faith Campbell, Family
Member*

Testifying for Bill 6668
Human Services, March 17, 2009

My name is Faith Campbell. I used to be a PCA myself; I stopped after I hurt my shoulder. I'm out on workman's comp now from my full time job at the hospital—I just had rotator cuff surgery. I go to my physical therapy three days a week.

My father had a stroke recently. He was in the nursing home until they said it was ok for him to return home as long as he had a lot of personal attention. They said we were approved to get PCAs to help with his at home care. I had no idea where to go next. I started approaching CNAs in the nursing home and asking around at the hospital, but very few people were interested in doing so much work for so little. Some people actually laughed in my face and said "I'm not working for that!" Having been a PCA myself and now providing a significant amount of care to my own father, I know exactly how much work it is and I don't blame them for saying that. I was lucky enough to finally find 4 PCAs that were willing to help.

It's frustrating! If I could offer my PCAs more than \$12/hr or at least be able to give them a full time position with 40 hours a week, it would be a much more stable workforce. As it is, they're working several jobs to pay the bills and if they make too much money they can't even get the health insurance! I feel bad about the position I put some of my PCAs in. I know they need the money and I know if they found a better job they would have no incentive to stay working for me.

Managing my father's care schedule is so difficult, providing around the clock care and never being able to have any one PCA do more than 25 hours of work each week... my life would fall apart if any of them found another job and stopped working with my father. Most of my PCAs are CNAs- I've convinced several to stay, to rearrange their hours if they needed, but to please not drop us entirely. I know it won't be long before they get a better offer. They care about my father and they're close with me too, but there are times when I just feel terrible, like I'm holding them back.

My PCAs do wonderful work, but when it's just me speaking up for them nothing changes. They need a voice of their own and the ability to have a say in their working conditions. I know when they're able to address their own concerns which will put them in a less stressful position. When PCAs have less on their minds they have more time to focus on quality care. Please, it is important to all of us to pass the Quality Home Care Council.