

6668

John Beamon, Personal Care Assistant

Bill 6668

Human Services Committee, 3/17/2009

My name is John Beamon. I'm a personal care assistant, I also work for people with developmental disabilities at the state level, and I have first hand experience since my son has aspergers syndrome.

I have worked with a consumer for three years. He is an adult male autistic who is verbal and can read and write. When I'm with him I try and get him active and out in the community. We do drumming with a group called Drums No Guns Commission, and I helped connect him with a program called Star Riders that does horse back riding. We go to movies or go do duckpin bowling, we do lots of hiking and walking. We'd go to Sleeping Giant, or East Rock, or Savin Rock's walking trail.

As his PCA, my roll was to be able to challenge him—while we would be out doing activities together I would talk with him and help to discuss his problems. From time to time his mother would call me and I'd come over and help work him through his crisis or help them work through various issues.

In order to pay my bills, provide for my son's health needs, his counseling, his tutoring, and be able to have an income I could live on, I applied to and got a part time job with the state. After that I had more stability, but it made it harder to be as flexible when my consumer needed me. I love the program I'm working with at the state—it's a model program, but it's very demanding and not something I can just reschedule or call out based on my consumer's needs. His mother was very understanding.

Look, to me, none of this is about the money. To me, I do my best to stand up for what's right. My main concern was putting my consumer in touch with good programs and people that I know in the community. People that I know can support him in being a strong, independent member of the community. My passion is to incorporate and unite all those really good programs that help people with the individuals that need them.

I couldn't be a PCA without some stability in my own life. That's why, to me, the quality home care council is important. It gives PCAs the ability to have a voice so we can have the stability to provide quality care to consumers who need it.