

6668



Connecticut Association of Centers for Independent Living  
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*...Working for the full integration, independence, and civil rights of people with disabilities through Centers for Independent Living*

**Testimony of Gary Waterhouse, Executive Director  
Before the Human Services Committee  
March 17, 2009**

Center for Disability Rights  
764A Campbell Ave.  
West Haven, CT 06516  
V 203-934-7077  
TDD 203-934-7079

***Raised House Bill (No. 6668) AN ACT PROVIDING QUALITY CARE, FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND NURSING HOME FUNDING REFORM.***

Disabilities Network of Eastern CT  
238 West Town Street  
Norwich, CT 06360  
V/TDD 860-823-1898

**CACIL SUPPORTS-** *Raised House Bill No. 6668* because the shortage of Personal Care Assistants (PCAs) in Connecticut is a significant barrier to people with disabilities (consumers) transitioning from Institutions to the Community with necessary supports and services. The shortage also impacts consumers and elders seeking to remain in the community and avoid nursing facilities. The baby boomer generation is poised to swamp nursing facilities and will demand community services.

Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County  
80 Ferry Boulevard  
Suite 210  
Stratford, CT 06497  
V 203-378-6977  
TDD 203-378-3248

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor in the latest national occupational projections for the 2006-12 period, determined that demand for direct-care workers over the next decade, particularly in-home and community based settings, will continue to outpace supply dramatically – unless policy-makers and employers work together to make these jobs competitively attractive compared to other occupations. Nationally- Personal and Home Care Aides are among the top ten fastest growing occupations with a 50.6% growth from 2006 to 2016.

Independence Northwest  
1183 New Haven Rd.  
Naugatuck, CT 06770  
V 203-729-3299  
TDD 203-729-1281

The mean wage for PCAs in CT in 2006 was \$10.26 per hour. However, PCAs are prevented from working more than 25.75 hours per week making max pay \$264.19 functionally keeping them far below a minimum wage worker earning \$8.00 per hour for a 40 hour week equalling \$320.00 per week.

Independence Unlimited  
Suite D  
151 New Park Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106  
V/TDD 860-523-5021

Admin. Reg. § 17b-262-593 (10) the regulation that created the personal care assistant program, expressly limits employment of any given employee to no more than 25.75 hours per week. The program was set up so as to use state money to pay for PCAs, but to ensure that the consumer remained the de jure employer of record. The intent of the state Department of Social Services was to avoid making either themselves or the recipient of services responsible to provide workers' compensation coverage.

A Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council is needed to meet the workforce development demands of the future. We must begin now to validate the value of the work of PCAs and provide a livable weekly wage and workers' compensation benefits at a minimum.