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March 8, 2011

Good Afternoon, Thank you for allowing me to speak on bill # HB 6486 this afternoon. My name is Donald James; I was one of the Community Organizers, out of Connecticut United Disability Action Groups, who help get the Personal Care Assistant Waiver past. This bill # HB 6486 goes against everything that we fault for. The Personal Care Assistants waiver was created so people who use the program would not be told how to hire, manage or fire their Personal Care Assistant. We did not want bureaucrats telling the employers what to do. The waiver has been running successfully with a few minor problems that should be worked out without the interference of the state bureaucrats. Except for the waiting list, which I feel, is so ridiculous, at the time that the bill was signed into law we were told the list would disappear after proving that the program was cost effective. Well the people who use this program proved that the program works and is not only COST EFFECTIVE, but has been used as a model for other states. I understand, a 1115 waiver allows the state to recoup some of the cost of running the programs but I strongly urge this legislation to double the waiting list and allow who ever needs to be on the waiver should be about to do so without waiting. We are not pesty rodents coming out of the woodwork; we're the people who elected you into office.

I strongly feel, allowing the Personal Care Assistants employees to become unionize is also not in the best interest for the Employers nor the state. If the Personal Care Assistants feels they need a pay raises they should be able to submit a bill asking for a 3% annual cost of living increase and let the Appropriation Committee decide. Back in the 30s and 40s the unions were needed and did good, BUT I feel that the union is NO PLACE IN THE WIAVER PROGRAM. This bill needs to die in committee. Thank you ones again for you time.

Sincerely,

Donald L. James