

Sandra Stanton, Personal Care Assistant
Bill 6486
Human Services Committee, March 8, 2011

My name is Sandra Stanton and I've been a PCA since 2004, about 6 or 7 years. I'm also a CNA.

I have one client now, I've been trying to find a second client since October or November. I asked Allied, which maintains the registry, if they have anyone but I just have to wait for a to call. My one client is 24-25 hours a week, not enough hours to get by. I've had trouble paying my bills and I'm in danger of losing my place. I'd have to move in with my mom if I lose my place, or get a cheaper place. Right now I get food stamps and Medicaid, but I still get bills from the hospital if I get a doctor. I got a bill for \$319 and I just can't pay for that.

Like other PCAs I don't have health insurance. When I get sick, I do go to the doctor. They send bills, saying that I need to pay them, but they have me on what they call spend-down. How do I pay the bills if I don't have the money? I don't call in sick ever but I try not to go to work for her when I'm sick so that I don't get her sick. If I do get sick, my client tells me that when I get better I can make up the time. If I have to go to a funeral, I go to the funeral and then go to her late. I'm lucky to have a client that lets me flex the schedule this way since I really can't afford to miss hours. I don't get paid for hours that I miss.

I'm trying to stick by this work, I like doing it. I like taking care of the elderly and sick people. My father died of cancer two years ago, I cared for him when he had radiation treatments. I would come over on my days off. I understand how important the work is because of my fathers. My father makes me want to stay in the work. And the lady I work for, I want to stick with her. I've been with her 5-6 years. I'm really part of my client's family. They invite me to Shabbat and Passover.

I work hard and need more hours so I can afford to pay my bills. I put my heart into this PCA work but I keep falling behind. Consumers need caring PCAs like me but we shouldn't have to risk not being able to pay bills. Hopefully when we create a workforce council we can sit down with consumers and the state and find a way to make the work more stable so that we can get full time hours.