

***Tanya Meneses, Personal Care Assistant***  
***Bill 6486***  
***Human Services Committee, March 8, 2011***

My name is Tanya Meneses and I've been doing home care work for more than 16 years now. I have my CNA license and I have worked in other care settings, but I really enjoy working in a home setting and giving 1-on-1 care. It's quality instead of quantity- it's how well I can take care of one person instead of how many people I can take care of. I really enjoy it. I like to know what my clients need, go in, and do it. It makes everyone happy.

Right now I have two clients for a total of just 18 hours a week of PCA care between the both. I'm trying to find more clients and more hours but it's difficult. I put an ad on Craigslist and also try to get clients through word-of-mouth. I think it's hard to find people needing care because there's not a current outlet where they can solicit help. The clients have the Allied registry to find PCAs, but PCAs have no way of contacting clients directly to offer our services.

It's sad to me that my clients have to go to Craigslist to find caregivers. I'm glad that it's there, but if it was my choice I'd definitely want an additional way to seek out care. It's difficult that people are seeking such intimate care over such a public source. I feel it's a private matter.

I also work as an office manager for about 30 hours a week. I prefer the hands-on people work of being a PCA and if I had more clients I would not be an office manager. I have to do it to get the additional pay because I don't have enough clients to be full-time.

Like the other PCAs, I don't have health insurance. The doctor's office for me is a last resort because when I have to go I pay out of pocket. I have to try to find a clinic that charges according to your pay; even with the scale it feels like I'm paying more than I can afford. It's not a great feeling that I give people the health care they need but I can't get the health care I need for myself. I don't understand the health care system. If at all possible, I'd like to continue doing PCA work. I don't think I can stay a PCA unless I get health insurance. When I'm sick, I suffer and my client suffers as well. My client doesn't have coverage and I lose pay. Most of the time, I just drag myself out of bed so that neither my client nor I lose out.

I support the workforce council legislation. I'm in favor of creating a more comprehensive registry so that it's easier for us to find full-time work. PCA work is so rewarding but we need to be able to have full time work to make it a career, and we need health insurance to take care of ourselves.