

***Dawn Luciano, Personal Care Assistant, Danielson
Bill 6486
Human Services Committee, March 8, 2011***

My name is Dawn Luciano and I'm a PCA. I have been working in the health care field for five years now, and I love it. I love the feeling of having a job that is more than "just a job"- one that is rewarding, where I feel wanted and needed. I really enjoy caring for people and helping them. I also value the personal relationship I have built with my client- she is my friend and I look forward to my time with her.

I have been working for the last three years with my female client who is 24 years old and is wheelchair-bound with cerebral palsy. I need to take all her notes and I also help her in the bathroom and do the transfers for her. I get her food and help her in any way she needs me to. As I said earlier, though, she is not just my client. Over the years she has become my friend outside of the work I do for her.

I work as a PCA only part-time on the weekends—I have a full-time job during the week. I would love to have the opportunity to work full-time as a PCA because I have such a passion for people of all ages. However, due to the fact that it does not pay enough to support my life nor my family and there are no medical benefits for my family, that is not possible. The wages and benefits are the only things that keep me from working full-time as a PCA . Still, though, I do the work part-time because this is my passion in life and I know that has what I have been called to do.

PCA's really need the two major things: Better pay and medical benefits. I know I can speak for many who love being in this profession we would do this full time if we could afford it. If lawmakers could find a way to raise wages and benefits, there would be more PCAs and we could stick with our clients longer. That means our clients would receive better, more continuous care. So, please, make it possible for us to improve these jobs.