

Testimony re: HB6486 (Raised) – An Act Concerning the Home Health Care Services and the Creation of a Personal Care Attendant Workforce Council

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As the employer of five personal care attendants who take help me do things which I am unable to do on my own and greatly increase the quality of my life, I am opposed to the passing of bill HB6486.

I care very much about my Personal Care Attendants. Some have worked for me as long as eight and one half years. I want to see them receive higher wages and benefits. They are like family to me. The relationship between a personal care attendant and his or her employer is a very unique and personal one.

I want to make it clear that I am not in any way opposed to unions. My father belonged to a union. I went to a union physician as a child. My grandparents were members of the Workmen's Circle and my sister worked in a Workmen's Circle summer camp. That union gave my family many benefits; however, this situation is very different.

My PCA's work for me. I do not own a widget factory. We work one on one to make each other's lives better.

There are many reasons why I am opposed to this act:

1. The creation of a Personal Attendant Workforce Council will add one more layer of bureaucracy to the PCA waiver program. More bureaucracy will not benefit the PCA's or their employers. It is likely to lead to a situation where consumers/employers will lose control over the employment of their PCA's.
2. It is no secret that the creation of the Council is designed to centralize a list of all working PCA's so that SEIU ("the union") can get a list of PCA's whom they can contact and then organize into a union.
3. We are all on the same page. We as employers want the best for "our people" and a union is not the best way to do that.
4. The Union is promising benefits which it can't deliver. There is only so much funding available and until more funding is available to these programs, we will not see pay raises or benefits.
5. On the other hand the union (if voted in) will be taking hard earned money from my PCA's without giving them any benefits.
6. This bill is designed to benefit SEIU, not my PCA's.
7. My PCA's have threatened to quit their jobs if a union is voted in.

Writing this testimony took a great deal of thought and time but I felt it was something I had to do to defend the welfare of my employees. The future of my employees, people who I care about like family, is at stake. If we think about the welfare of our PCA's we cannot support this bill.