

***Wanda Zuniga, Personal Care Assistant, Hartford
Bill 6486
Human Services Committee, March 8, 2011***

My name is Wanda Zuniga and I'm a Certified Nursing Assistant, CNA. I started out working in a nursing home, then as a school nurse, and the six years ago I started working as a PCA.

Right now I have two clients, for a total of 30 hours between the two. I can only work 25 hours a week for each client so it's normal to have many clients. I'm trying to get full time hours by finding a third client. I'm waiting for a call to meet with a potential client soon.

I don't have health benefits. If I get sick I'd have to pay for my bills. Luckily I haven't gotten real sick. When I'm sick I call the other PCAs and they'll do the hours of care for my client, but I don't get paid for that day. It makes it hard to call in sick. I really need benefits. I need health insurance.

I would love to continue to do PCA work. It's hard to pay my bills but I work with it. If I had a little more pay I'd go back to school to be an RN. I'd work in a hospital in emergency room or something. I think RN work would have benefits but also be more exciting. I can't afford to go back to school right now, though.

I hope lawmakers will support the proposed workforce council. PCA work is so important to our clients, we just need to make the job as important as the work.