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**TESTIMONY ON  
AN ACT CREATING A PROCEDURE FOR PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS  
TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN WITH THE STATE.**

**RAISED BILL NO. 5433**

**MARCH 13, 2012**

Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski, ladies and gentlemen of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Cathy Ludlum, and I am here to express my strong opposition to Raised Bill 5433 which would create a procedure for personal care attendants to collectively bargain with the State. I have employed PCAs for 23 years, and I am a participant in the Personal Care Assistance Waiver. I have a team of about 12 people, and they give me a fantastic quality of life: I have lived on my own for the last 20 years, I work, I am active in my community, I do interesting things with my friends, and I'm healthy and happy.

There are many reasons why I think passage of this bill will be harmful both to PCAs and to their employers with disabilities. In the interest of time, however, I am going to focus on just three areas:

**Personal assistants don't want it.** Let me read part of the eloquent testimony submitted by a personal assistant.

**Personal assistants have already been harassed by the SEIU which doesn't take no for an answer.** Let me read a letter received by a personal assistant in the DDS system. What the SEIU doesn't seem to understand is that NO MEANS NO, not MAYBE, and not YES.

**There are many things wrong with the bill itself.** The new council that would be created consists primarily of political appointees, not necessarily experts in disability services and supports. People who actually use personal assistance services are in the minority. In addition, the critical no-strike clause is absent. The working groups to study these issues met for barely two months. In the rush by the governor's office and the SEIU to push this through, what other important things have been overlooked?

It has been said that *the people united can never be defeated*. As a participant in a waiver funded by the Department of Social Services, I stand in solidarity with numerous waiver participants in the Department of Developmental Services, personal care attendants, family members, friends, and members of the community. We also stand with the family child care providers who will be testifying against Senate Bill 352. Please listen to the voice of the people and vote no to Raised Bill 5433.

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**March 13, 2012. Testimony re: Raised Bill HB5433: An act creating a procedure for personal care attendants to collectively bargain with the state.**

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Lynrhonda Mcfarlane. I am a PCA and president of CTAPA, the Connecticut Association of Personal Assistance. I oppose the raising of Bill HB5433. Also a Democrat and member of a union already I see no reason to make PCAs unionized. I am very unhappy with the union that I am in now. I see no changes made or no promises kept. There is no good representation of its' members and no jobs are being kept. There are a lot of people losing their jobs and the union is doing nothing about it. I really don't want to be put in another situation like this where I am force to be part of a union that I do not want to join.

All I am seeing being done from unions is that they are taking union dues from my check every week. Also there is an issue being raised that PCAs are not getting paid enough money, well I get paid more as a PCA then I do at my other job as a customer service rep. I make minimum wage at my other job and get union dues taken out of that little check. Where as working as a PCA I have a decent income and I don't have to work long shifts everyday.

I believe passing this bill and unionizing PCAs will hurt this profession and the employer/employee relationship. How is it that if unionized PCAs will be required to receive training from people who are outsiders and not their employers??? What sense does that make. Wouldn't you think that PCAs employers have the best knowledge on how to train them. Passing this bill will not be in the best interest of PCAs and their employers.

To Diane Golden

I apologize for the inconvenience we have cause, but my supervisor says in order for no one to come and knock at your door. I if you please sign these cards and send them in. No one will bother you again.

Thank You.  
Rosalia Rodriguez  
2:15 p.m 2/7/12

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