

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



J. BRENDAN SHARKEY
HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

March 13, 2012

Representative Zalaski
Senator Prague
Co-Chairs Labor and Public Employees Committee
Room 3800
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Representative Zalaski and Senator Prague, I am submitting written testimony in support of SB 352 AA Creating a Process for Family Child Care Providers to Collectively Bargain with the State and HB 5433 AA Creating a Procedure for Personal Care Attendants to Collectively Bargain with the State.

First, I would like to address HB 5433. As many of you know, I lost my mom last year. During her illness, I experienced some very difficult times dealing with the many home care agencies in her area. Throughout the process, I became very concerned about the level of care my mom was receiving. I believe that this legislation will help to improve the quality of care we all seek for our loved ones. There is a real need for organizing these workers and providing them with better representation.

By giving home care workers the right to bargain collectively, we will reduce turnover and build high-quality, stable home care jobs. Home care workers will be able to bargain for wages and benefits and career opportunities and more people with disabilities and seniors will have greater access to find the home care workers they need to live at home as long as they choose.

The second bill SB 352, will provide family child care providers with the right to collectively bargain. This bill will allow these providers to continue to improve the quality of care they provide to so many of our children. The State also depends on home-based care to serve the families in Care4Kids, the State child care subsidy program.

As you already know, on September 21, 2011, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 9, which began the process toward enabling family child care providers who participate in Care4Kids to vote to unite and collectively bargain

with the State. That election was held on December 20, 2011. ninety-five percent of providers voting authorized SEIU to represent them with the State. Providers have won their union under the Executive Order, but this legislation will provide full representational rights for these workers.

I strongly encourage the Labor and Public Committee to support both of these very important pieces of legislation. Together we can work to improve both the working conditions of these employees and the quality of care they provide our residents.