

Testimony Submitted to the Committee on Labor and Public Employees

House Bill 5433 – An Act Creating a Procedure for Personal Care Attendants to Collectively Bargain with the State

March 13, 2012

My name is Mavis Rosemond. I am a Hartford resident, and I support HB 5433. I have worked as both a certified nurse's aide as well as a private home duty aide over the last ten years, serving both older adults and the developmentally disabled by assisting them with activities of daily living. The work that I do is very similar to the work that the personal care assistants seeking collective bargaining rights do. I am currently employed full-time by an assisted living facility where I care for mostly elderly residents. Unlike many personal care assistants though, I do receive health care benefits, paid time off, and I would be eligible for workers' compensation if I got injured on the job. Despite my access to benefits and fairly steady employment, it is still a real struggle to make ends meet for my family. I have two young children. I have worked more than one job for most of my adult life, and, still, it can be difficult to pay the bills.

The work we do is valuable to society and we work hard. We know our clients intimately and often know how to respond to their needs and difficulties better than anyone. Dignity should be afforded to both consumers and workers, and we have to be able to earn a living. I urge you to support collective bargaining rights for the approximately 6,000 personal care assistants who would benefit to give them the opportunity to be more fairly compensated for their work, which serves Connecticut's most vulnerable residents and their families.