

Anthony Ligon
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Dear Members of the Human Services Committee,

My name is Anthony Ligon, and I am here to speak in support of Senate Bill No. 1044 "AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOUPMENT OF STATE COSTS ATTRIBUTABLE TO LOW WAGE EMPLOYERS."

I am a homecare provider and I live in New Haven. I've been a caregiver all my life, even before I got paid for it. This is something I do that comes from the heart, it's a passion for me. My great grandmother has Alzheimer's and my cousin has down syndrome, and I've always helped care for them.

I became a homecare worker in 2013. My patient has a traumatic brain injury. He came home 5 years ago in a vegetative state, but thanks to the 24-hour-care of homecare workers like me, he has made a lot of progress. I do overnight care for him and he needs help with walking and balance even to go to and from the bathroom. He is nonverbal and we are working with him on relearning to speak – but without caregivers like me, he would not be able to progress in life, and his family members wouldn't be able to carry on with their lives and hold jobs because they would have to care for him around the clock.

I am 22 years old and want to make this type of work my career. However, the wages are so low that I can't afford to go to school, I can't afford to buy or maintain a car, and I can't afford day to day living. I live with my grandmother and I rely on food stamps just to put food on the table. Because the bus doesn't run all the way to my client's house, I have to budget over two hours each way to take both a bus and a taxi to work every day.

In addition to being a homecare provider, I also used to work at a fast food restaurant, where I made \$9 per hour. The work was hard, fast-paced, and demanding, with very low wages. I am happy to no longer be doing that work and instead be doing something I feel passionate about, but those workers who are the backbone of the fast food industry deserve living wages, too.

This bill would require large low -wage employers like the one I worked for to either pay \$15/hour or pay a penalty to help fund homecare services for the elderly and disabled like those I care for. If this bill is passed, it would serve three important purposes: help struggling fast food workers, improve funding to help my client receive the services he deserves, and maybe also provide the revenue to help me make a living wage as well.

Just like my client deserves care that will allow him to progress in life, I also deserve wages that will allow me to progress, to better myself through education, and to do the work I love without having to rely on government assistance.

Thank you,

Anthony Ligon (anthony.ligon@aol.com)