

Via Email: LABTestimony@cga.ct.gov

February 16, 2015

Sen. Gary Winfield  
Rep. Peter Tercyak  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Room 3800, Legislative Office Building  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Sen. Winfield, Rep. Tercyak, and Members of the Labor Committee:

My name is Lorna Barrows. I was born and raised in Jamaica. I came here to Bridgeport in 2000 and have worked as a nanny ever since. I have had three nanny jobs during this time. My first job was as a live-in nanny in Westport. I used to arrive on a Tuesday morning and was supposed to leave on Saturday. This never happened because the parents went out every Saturday and came back early Sunday morning. For this additional work I was never paid any overtime. At this particular time I was undocumented and did not think I had a voice to assert my rights.

I worked as a nanny in Westport for a different family until August of 2014. I took care of two children, a girl who is seven and a boy who is five. I loved these children because I had been taking care of them for five years. In my current position I have a written job description that explains my duties. It states that I am responsible for the well-being of these children from 8 to 6. The duties include taking the children to school and to their extracurricular activities. The job description contains a definition of light housework. Having a written job description keeps my employer and me on the same page.

As I mentioned above, I drove these children to and from their activities in Westport. Initially, I was not being compensated for the gas. The written job description did not specify if I would be reimbursed. This is where I feel I am abused in my current position. I told my employer that I needed to be paid for gas. He just gave me whatever he felt like giving me. After a while, every week I asked him for gas money. Then finally, he started to give me \$20 every other week. This arrangement costs me more than I am being compensated for. It would have been helpful to have this arrangement spelled out in a contract when I first started.

Based on my experience, as a nanny, I believe there should be a guideline for employers and employees. Something that will make each person feel comfortable that they are not being exploited. I believe that all live-in domestic workers should be paid overtime. This is why I urge the Labor and Public Employees Committee to pass S.B. 446- the CT Domestic Worker Bill of Rights.

Sincerely,

Lorna Barrows  
131 Little Deer  
Bridgeport, CT 06606  
labarrows@yahoo.com