

1
*Public Hearing April 23, 2015
Finance, Revenue, & Bonding Committee
For Senate Bill# 1135: An Act Establishing a Sustainable Path for Maintaining the Budget
Reserve Fund and Reducing the Effect of Revenue Volatility on the State Budget*

Katherine Jones-Newton
42 Walnut St
New Haven CT 06511

April 23, 2015

Dear Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Katherine Jones- Newton and I live in New Haven. I am here because I rely on the state to help me live an independent life. But the state budget isn't providing the reliable or adequate funding people like me need for support services, or for a fair wage for the homecare workers the state pays to assist me living on my own. I hope you will choose to support increasing revenue for the state budget and making it more reliable with ideas like Bill #1135.

In 2012 I was in a bad car accident and I broke my hip. Since then my mobility has been limited and it has been thanks to the help of home care workers that I have been able to stay in my home and live as much as a normal life as I can have.

Being able to receive home care services in my house has had a great impact on my quality of life. After being in a facility for 6 months, I know the difference that it makes to be able to be in my home where I feel secure, comfortable and happy.

My home care workers help me in every part of my life; they help me move, take a shower, make sure I take my medication, get my groceries, clean my house and a million other small things that I might need throughout the day. They also become my friends and they support me in my times of need and I do the same.

I have two homecare providers and even after taking on two or more jobs, they struggle to make ends meet. Because they make only \$13.11 per hour and their hours are limited to 25.75 hours per week due to state statute, by the time they pay their bills they still can't make ends meet. Both qualify for rental assistance because the wages are too low to afford a place on their own. Plus, working two or more jobs is wear and tear on their lives.

If more state money came in to the healthcare system because of revenue changes and bills like this, maybe homecare subsidies would be increased so that patients like me could pay my workers a better wage and they wouldn't have to rely on public assistance.

As a person who receives home care services, I know the impact that they can have on people's lives. Home Care workers help me have a good life while I stay in my home feeling secure, comfortable and happy. Now it's time to increase revenue funding and raise wages so that my home care workers can take care of their own homes and families, too.

Thank you,

Katherine Jones-Newton