

Sylvia Grant * 38 Main Street Apt 202 * New Britain CT 06051

February 25, 2016

To the Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

I ask you to support Senate Bill #210, AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES FROM PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS.

I've been a homecare worker since 2000, providing services paid for by the State's D.S.S. waiver program to consumers who self-direct their own care at home. I'm also a CNA working in a nursing facility, but homecare is more personal. It's a one-on-one relationship and you can build a very personal connection with your client.

I work 8 hours per week at my nursing home and I have workers' comp insurance regardless of the number of hours I work. However, in my homecare job, I worked 25 hours per week and have no workers' comp insurance, which leaves me vulnerable and without protection.

I was taking care of a client who is paralyzed from the waist down. I take him to dialysis, I make his meals, I walk with him in his specialized walker. As his aide, I have to bend down on my knees to help him move from bed to wheelchair to walker. The day I got hurt, he was coming from dialysis, he had to make a bowel movement so he wanted to hurry and get inside the house. As he got up from his chair and began walking with his walker, he mis-stepped and began to fall. I went to catch him so he didn't hurt himself.

I got a strange feeling in my back. I paid it no attention, went home, but the next day the pain was so bad I went to the emergency room. The Doctor said I pulled a muscle and ordered me to stay out of work for a week. However, missing a single day of work means I don't get paid, and I can't afford not to get paid. So, I went straight back to work and had no choice but to grin and bear it. This injury was 2 years ago, and I still have intermittent back pain today.

Those who receive homecare services have a fixed income, and are already hurting from the cuts that have affected the elderly. My consumer cannot afford to pay for workers' comp out of his own pocket, and should not be forced to choose between using his limited budget to pay for more hours of care or for a basic benefit that we should already have.

Why should my health and safety be valued at any less just because I work in someone's home?

Please support Senate Bill #210 to extend workers' compensation insurance coverage to these home care consumers and the Personal Care Attendants like me who help them live at home.

Thank you.