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United for Quality Care

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Karen Douwou, Consumer  
Wethersfield  
SEIU District 1199 New England  
Before the Banking Committee

***In SUPPORT of HB 5426: AN ACT CONCERNING LIENS FOR UNPAID WAGES AND A REQUIREMENT THAT FISCAL INTERMEDIARIES MEET EMPLOYER TIMELY PAY OBLIGATIONS***

Good Morning Senator Kasser, Representative Lopes and members of the Committee, my name is Karen Dowou and I've always lived independently my entire life. Before I had my foot amputated, I worked a long career at Saint Francis hospital as a scheduling secretary in the nursing department. Afterward, I spent time in a rehab facility and then used the Money Follows the Person program to come back home this January.

If I didn't have my PCAs helping me, I would not be able to stay home. My PCAs mean the world to me because they allow me to be home, where I have my own space and where I'm comfortable. My PCAs work very hard and they deserve to be paid on time, but unfortunately that sometimes doesn't happen.

I've only been with Allied since January and it's March and I'm having major problems with them. My PCAs fax their timesheets or sometimes even drop them off in person. At least twice since January, Allied claimed to have not received them, including one of the times they dropped them off in person. In both those cases, they had to wait an entire week to get the problem fixed.

The biggest problem is that when there's a correction needed, I only get an automated message about it that doesn't specify which employee's timesheet has a problem. And when I call Allied, I wait on hold for 25-45 minutes, and sometimes as much as an hour. If I email, they may not return my message for a week. I go to dialysis Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, so often when I'm calling Allied I'm at dialysis and the nurses will tell me my blood pressure is going up because the process is so stressful.

When PCAs don't get paid on time, it impacts all of us mentally, physically, and emotionally. It's hard for me so I can only imagine how hard it is for a consumer who's older, or doesn't know how to use a computer. I don't think Allied takes this job seriously and we're asking for your help to make sure our PCAs get paid on time every time, so we as consumers can focus on our health and independence. Please pass HB 5426 so that Allied can be held responsible. Thank you for your time.