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United for Quality Care

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Sharon Thorstenson, Consumer  
Plantsville  
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 Sharon Thorstenson and I live in Plantsville. I'm a Consumer Employer who receives PCA services in my home. I became disabled due to my diagnosis of demyelinating spinal cord disease. I have tremors, and my whole life has been hijacked and held hostage by excruciating pain. I'm ever so grateful that I have PCAs but the responsibility that's been imposed on us by Allied really stinks.

Last year, I had 3 PCAs who constantly had problems getting paid on time by Allied. They went so far as to drop off their timesheets directly, in addition to us faxing AND emailing their timesheets. Eventually, they quit because of the frustrations which meant I had to go without care and go back on the hunt for new PCAs. It was an incredibly stressful situation for me but I don't blame them for quitting because it was their livelihood. One of them was even getting evicted.

At least once a month, there's a problem with payroll. When Allied finally answers the phones after you've been on hold an hour, they'll sometimes refuse to transfer you to payroll. And the customer service reps may not even know what the problem is. Once, I called to see what the problem was and the customer service rep said "I don't see any notes in your file. Maybe your fax was too dark." And I responded: I emailed them in a pdf! I told her I was looking at my sent mail and they were clear as day. It boggles the mind that after spending hours on hold they can't always tell you exactly what's wrong.

Just last week, I submitted timesheets. One had a legitimate error – I'd forgotten the date – but the other was perfectly clear and accurate. They complained that my signature went through the box where my PCA enters the date AND they complained about the "3" in the March date and rejected it because I didn't put my initials next to it. I included a copy of the signature at the end of my testimony.

This is probably the 5<sup>th</sup> time that timesheets have been rejected for reasons like this. But my tremors sometimes make it difficult for me to write as cleanly as they want. If timesheets are rejected, that means my PCAs need to come back and REDO them. Not only do my PCAs waste their gas to come back to my house to fix timesheets like this, but these ongoing problems rob me of my ability to focus on my health and what I really need to do. Passing HB 5426 would give PCA's like mine a method to hold Allied responsible when their pay is late. Thank you for your time.

