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United for Quality Care

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Jordan Deangelo, PCA  
Winstead  
SEIU 1199NE  
Before the Insurance and  
Real Estate Committee

***In Support of SB 842: AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTHCARE IN CONNECTICUT***

Good Afternoon Senator Lesser, Representative Wood, and members of the Insurance and Real Estate committee. My name is Jordan Deangelo and I am a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) that lives and works in Winstead, CT caring for my mom. I am here today to testify in support of SB 842.

Caring for others has always been a part of my life. As a teenager I cared for my grandmother, and so when it became obvious that my mother would benefit from a personal care attendant I stepped up. I enjoy caring for my mom. It makes me happy to know I am able to allow her to continue living in her home and do so comfortably. With that said it is also difficult caring for my mom. There is an emotional tax to watching a loved one struggle, and even though I am only paid for 40 hours a week, I am essentially working 24/7 to care for my mom.

Home care workers in Connecticut are professional care givers. The work we do allows people to receive critical care while remaining in their own homes. We don't just clean their homes or help them in and out of bed, we help them socialize and continue to do the things they love. We care about our consumers; they are human beings and deserve to live normal lives. It saddens me deeply that while we work so hard to provide a dignified life for our consumers, we are treated with utter disregard by the society we live in.

Unlike many people, health insurance is not offered to me through my job. Furthermore, I make too much money to be eligible for Husky. At 27, I have not had health insurance in almost a decade. I have needed glasses since 2013, but simply cannot afford them. When I was 23 I suffered a heart attack and was taken to the hospital in an ambulance. The ambulance ride was \$1,000 and I am still paying it off today. Additionally, the doctor at the hospital urged me to see a cardiologist, but I could not because I couldn't afford it. Even routine, preventative measures are out of the question for me. It has been so long since I've been to the dentist I don't even remember my last cleaning.

If Connecticut had a public option, essential caregivers like me would be able to access healthcare instead of helplessly watching our bodies deteriorate. If Connecticut had a public option, it would mean that I could stay in Connecticut instead of moving to a neighboring state with better services. If Connecticut had a public option, it would mean that I could access the

care I need without triggering a financial crisis. Please do the right thing and pass this bill, so everyone in Connecticut can have access to high quality and high value health care. Please support SB 842.

Thank you for your time.