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United for Quality Care

March 11, 2021
Paula Levy Thomas
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District 1199NE
Before the Labor Committee

In Support of SB 1002: AN ACT CONCERNING LABOR ISSUES RELATED TO COVID-19, PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER STAFFING MATTERS

and In Support of HB 6595: AN ACT CONCERNING LABOR MATTERS RELATED TO COVID-19, PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER STAFFING ISSUES

Good Morning Senator Kushner, Representative Porter and members of the Committee. My name is Paula Levy Thomas and I am an Assistant Coordinator for a group home operated by Journey Found. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 1002 and House Bill 6595.

I enjoy my job because it gives me the opportunity to improve the lives of the people we support. I provide direct care. I pass meds and I'm in charge of their recreation activities. I set up vacations, set up work schedules, and handle documentation for the clients and the house.

In the beginning of the pandemic, we were faced with many hardships. We were continuing to deliver care in a group home – a mass setting – in close quarters with each other and our clients. Because of this, one of our clients got sick, and unfortunately we lost them to COVID. We were all devastated. It's hard to lose someone that is like family to you. Their death hit us really hard and is still to this day taking a toll on all of us.

Passing Senate Bill 1002 and House Bill 6596 would change my life because it would lower my anxiety, and allow me to have the comfort of knowing we have adequate protective equipment for the rest of the pandemic and in the future. Please help protect frontline essential workers like me. Thank you for your time.