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United for Quality Care

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Tara Maxwell, Direct Support Staff
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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 Tara Maxwell and I am a direct support staffer at Mosaic and I have been working for the company since 2017. I am here today to share some of my experiences and to ask you to support Senate Bill 1002 and House Bill 6595 so that frontline essential workers like me will have some support.

I enjoy my work because I get to help the individuals I work with have a normal life. I get to help them enjoy their life as well. My job is usually spent helping my individuals with a shower or the restroom if needed. I look to see who needs medication and I cook and clean. Since Covid hit the individuals aren't allowed to go out in the community so the staff and I do activities with them at the house. We try to take them in the back yard on nice days and try to keep them active despite the lockdown.

When Covid first hit our clients didn't get sick right away. Eventually they all got it from a staff member that worked at our group home. One individual went to the Hospital because of it. He was in the hospital for 3 weeks and had to come back to the group home because the hospital needed his bed. It took him a month and a half to get better. It was very stressful for staff because we were already short staffed and we were concerned about the clients dying. The Covid pay we received only lasted 7 days and we all know the pandemic has already lasted a year. Management didn't pay us extra beyond the 7 days, even though we still had sick individuals in the house.

If you pass Senate Bill 1002 and House Bill 6595 today, we would have better guidelines to follow for Covid and some encouragement to do our jobs. Please support these bills so that frontline essential workers like me have some support.