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United for Quality Care

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Terrell Williams, PCA  
New Haven  
SEIU 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 Afternoon Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Terrell Williams and I am a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) living in New Haven, CT. I care for consumers in New Haven, Hamden, and West Haven, and have been doing this work for 12 years.

Working as a Personal Care Attendant is something I am incredibly proud of. Home care work is certainly not for everyone but if you have a mind for taking care of people, it just makes sense. I like the one on one time I get to share with my consumers. It's not just a job, you get to develop wonderful relationships with your consumers and there is an instant reward when you're doing this work knowing your helping someone. When I leave my family in the morning to go provide for them, I feel good and happy doing this work.

I typically care for three consumers, which allows me to make enough money to get by. When the COVID Pandemic began, the number of consumers I was caring for went from three to one. One of my consumers become ill and had to enter a facility, while I had to stop caring for another consumer due to an outbreak on the public transportation I used to reach his home. When this happened, my income was reduced because as PCA's, we have no paid sick leave and we weren't getting any hazard pay for the work we were doing.

If we had benefits in homecare, like hazard pay, paid sick days, and access to PPE, it would give me a greater peace of mind, and it would enable me to take the time I need to care for myself when I get sick without having to worry about losing pay and not being able to care for my family. We care for the most vulnerable; and all we're asking for is to be able to care for ourselves, too. Please pass Senate Bill 1002 and House Bill 6595. Thank you for your time.