



SEIUHealthcare
United for Quality Care

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Before the Public Health Committee

In Support of SB 1030 AN ACT CONCERNING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES With Changes.

Good afternoon Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Calvia Bennett, I live in Hartford, and I've worked at the Newington Rapid Recovery Rehab Center as a CNA for 15 years. I am here today to testify in support of SB 1030 with changes.

I love working in my nursing home. I love seeing my residents laugh and smile, and love hearing them say good morning when I enter their room. One of the main reasons why I became a CNA is because of how rewarding it is to be able to provide emotional support for my residents. The relationships I've made through my work will stay with me forever.

The services I provide for my residents are essential for their survival. We do not simply provide medical services for our residents, but we also lead them through social activities. We provide this care around the clock.

Appropriate staffing is critical when it comes to providing high quality care for our residents. The nursing staff, consisting of LPNs, CNAs, and RNs, are the most important component of the healthcare delivery system in nursing homes. The work we do does not only ensure our residents are cared for but that they are safe as well. As caregivers, we want to maintain the highest level of physical, mental, and psychological well-being possible for our residents. However, when staffing is low we are forced to work exhausting hours, which results in burn out and negatively impacts resident care and safety. It is not acceptable to staff nursing homes at the bare minimum. Addressing low staffing is one sure way to improve the care residents receive in homes, while reducing the burnout experienced by caregivers.

Another way to improve the care received by residents in nursing homes is to improve infection control education and training. Our experience with COVID-19 has only highlighted the importance of infection control, particularly when caring for older residents who are more vulnerable. It is also important to ensure this education and training is offered in a bilingual manner. Our staff is very diverse, as is the population we care for. We must give our staff the training and resources necessary for providing the best care.

Low staffing and improved infection control training are both included in SB 1030. This bill would require a higher standard of staffing, which is good for the staff and the residents. With that said, this bill would also move nursing homes to 12 hour shifts, which is a big mistake. Staff

are already exhausted and burnt out. Increasing the hours of our shifts will only perpetuate this issue. Shifts should remain as they are now; we simply need more staff on those shifts.

Overall I am happy with the proposals included in SB 1030 as I believe it will greatly improve the nursing home industry. Stockpiling PPE is important, expanding staffing is a necessity, and improving infection control will make us prepared for future viruses. Our residents deserve the best care and with SB 1030 we can give it to them. Please pass SB 1030.

Thank you for your time.