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United for Quality Care

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Katherine Jones-Newton, Consumer
New Haven
SEIU District 1199 New England
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Katherine Jones-Newton. In 2012, I was in a bad car accident and I broke my hip. Since then my mobility has been limited and it has been thanks to the help of home care workers that I have been able to stay in my home and live as much of a normal life as I possible.

Being able to receive services in my own home has had a great impact on my quality of life. After being in a facility for 6 months, I know the difference that it makes to be able to be in my home where I feel secure, comfortable and happy. My home care workers help me in every part of my life; they help me move, take a shower, make sure I take my medication, get my groceries, clean my house and a million other small things that I might need throughout the day. They also become my friends and they support me in my times of need and I do the same for them.

Allied has paid my homecare workers for the past 7 years, and in my opinion the problems with Allied are getting worse. Several months ago, for example, I faxed the timesheets and kept the fax confirmation sheet. However, on the day before payday, I got a call from Allied saying they couldn't find the timesheets for one of my workers. That worker then had to re-fax them herself – which cost her \$6 – and she STILL didn't get paid on payday. Instead, she had to wait another 8 days to get paid the following Friday. My homecare worker had to go around borrowing money to cover her bills. In fact, *I* lent her money to get her through.

During another pay period, we had an additional problem. When I called Allied, they told me that both my PCAs would get paid. Then, I got an automated text saying there was a problem, and when I called they told me that my two PCAs had an hours' overlap. Except they were wrong: there was no overlap, and my PCAs' timesheets were filled out correctly. However, it didn't matter: they still held one entire week of pay for one of my PCAs. Because the time had been correct to start with, I simply submitted another timesheet showing the same exact hours with an "R" on the top, and they paid her a week late. She was so frustrated she wanted to quit, and I don't blame her.

My PCAs make me feel secure, comfortable, and happy in my home. But they can't be secure, comfortable and happy if they can't pay their bills and support their families. Our homecare workers work hard – and they deserve better.

Thank you for your time.