



SEIUHealthcare®
United for Quality Care

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Tara Maxwell, Direct Care Giver
Mosaic
SEIU District 1199 New England
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Tara Maxwell and I have been a Direct Support Staff for the last three years. I also have been my mom's primary caregiver for the past 25 years.

I got into this work when I went looking for caregiving jobs at a job fair, and I was hired by Mosaic. Since I spent so much time caring for my mother, I wanted to be able to continue working in that kind of an environment. Working at a group home allows me to do that.

I love working with the individuals I work with because it is very meaningful for me to have the opportunity to give them a good life. I love the individuals being served at the group home. We laugh and joke together. I love seeing them happy and enjoying themselves when we take them out into the community for an activity. I try to be there for them with compassion when they are going through a hard time. I am there for them above all. My manager tells me that when I'm gone, the individuals at the group home ask when I'm coming back and say that they miss me. That's a great feeling to have. It means I am doing my job.

The services I provide are very underfunded. I had one raise in the last twelve years. I see our clients suffer because of lack of funding, and it hurts. Increased funding is needed so that the individuals we serve can have the best quality of care possible, and so that the staff caring for them can have a decent standard of living. Workers like me often don't make enough to adequately take care of ourselves and our families, but we're expected to be able to adequately take care of others. We don't do this work to get rich, but we shouldn't have to work multiple jobs just to feed our families.

Increased funding will allow us to not be short-staffed, and also to avoid the snowball effect that short-staffing causes. We care about the individuals we serve and that is why we don't want to have continue doing more with less. We need better staffing, better pay, and more resources to give the highest quality care. We truly care about the clients we work with.

I urge you work with us going forward to find a way to expand our services and improve our staffing so we can provide the best care possible to people with disabilities in our state. Thank you for your time.