

Appropriations Committee Talking Points

Public Hearing on:

**[H.B. 6439](#) An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023,
And Making Appropriations Therefor.**

Health Subcommittee

Tuesday, March 2, 10:00 am

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Laura Washinton And I work in group homes at CRI for intellectually disabled people as a direct support professional.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 6439 An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, And Making Appropriations Therefor.

Community nonprofits provide essential services in every city and town in Connecticut, serving people in need and employing tens of thousands. They are what make Connecticut a great place to live and work.

I'm a 30 year dedicated support professional providing care to people with intellectual disabilities and mental health problems. And in all my year's no matter what company I have suffered because I choose to care for others. I have been homeless, and hungry because I do not make enough. I do not have a car to even get back and forth to work for my shift. Most money goes to pay for transportation which does not leave enough to eat healthy and pay for somewhere to stay.

It does matter that I should matter and have the quality of life I pride myself in giving my clients. It takes a selfless person to do what we do, especially when you go to work with people who have significant behavioral problems. I sometimes get spat on, kicked, bitten, called every name in the book and still I return the next day. Even though I am tired, hungry, and broke because I am under paid. But I still have kindness and respect for the same clients all day everyday.

I would love to afford to pay my bills and have my own transportation and still have groceries. But every check is a choice. I have been treated like a maid, lost teeth, been kicked and have been scratched and injured, I still return to work. I hold on to my Job with a humble heart and mind .

Now, not just for me but for all direct support workers and CLAs it's time to be recognized for our efforts and get the pay we deserve for the quality of life that most american health care workers have. It not going to hurt to be 25 to 30 a hour just like other health care workers. We pick up where they leave off. It is time. We matter and deserve to have equal pay and opportunity as well.

Thank you for your time

I pray your consideration