



SEIUHealthcare
United for Quality Care

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Trinity Hill

Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Caren Bailey Reid and I am a CNA at Trinity Hill in Hartford, CT. I've worked at Trinity Hill for 12 years and I love my work. I'm here today to urge you to fund Nursing Homes

I can't tell you how much I love my residents. I am very close with them. I enjoy caring for them like they are my family and I know how much they trust me. I love to give them care and I try to sit and talk with my residents. I'd love to be able to do that more, but we just don't have enough staff anymore to have those kinds of interactions very often.

This is largely because of staffing. We had problems before the pandemic, but because of it, everything has been reduced. Originally, we had 14 CNA's on my shift, which got cut to 12, and then 10. I work on the HIV unit and we have 30 residents. We have residents who need one on one care. To our residents, we are everything. Their therapists, doctors, friends, family, their shoulder to cry on - their everything. Since they can't see their families at this time, we have taken on the role of our residents families. These folks have extreme acuity. They need a lot of care, and we are there.

When staff is low, management doesn't care. They don't try to replace or add staff to the schedule. Because of the low staffing, I have had co-workers get injured because they were working with low staffing. When they get injured, they don't stop working because we are not paid enough or people don't have sick leave because of the pandemic. Right now we have 4-5 people who are working with work related injuries. And that is just physical injuries. Many of us are more depressed as staff, and we aren't allowed time off because we don't have staff. We end up burning ourselves out and have no sick leave left to recover and spend time with our families.

Nursing Home workers are not paid enough and our health insurance is too expensive. Many of us work multiple jobs because it's the only way we can make ends meet. In addition, workers leave because of the low pay and that increases low staffing ratios. We are finding it difficult to recruit workers because we work so hard and risk our lives and our families lives with COVID. Many workers think they can work at fast food restaurants and make the same wages without the risk. We need help! Please help fund nursing homes across Connecticut so that workers like me have a pathway to \$20, and affordable benefits.