



SEIUHealthcare®
United for Quality Care

March 3, 2021
Totlyn Riley, CNA
Secure Care 60 West
SEIU 1199 NE

Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Totlyn Riley. I live in Hartford CT and I have worked at secure care 60 West in Rocky Hill since 2013. I have been a care giver for 8 years and I'm currently studying to be an emergency medical responder. I'm here today to ask you to fund Nursing Homes because caregivers like me deserve to be paid for the work that we do.

I love being a CNA because I am able to put a smile on the faces of my residents and I love to be able to bring them comfort. I try to spend some time with them during the day, and I really see them the same as my family members. I wish I could spend more time giving them care, but because of the staffing levels we are not able to take as much time as we used to be able to.

Over the years the job has definitely gotten more and more challenging. The population we take care of are now more combative, sometimes dangerous and require special care. A number of residents require one on one care and there are so few of us to do so much work, we are usually stressed out trying to do our work.

The staffing levels also make it more difficult to hire and retain Aides at the current rate of pay and with the working conditions we regularly have to work in. These days so few people are willing to enter the field of long term health care for so little when they risk catching a deadly disease on the job and bringing it home to their family.

During the pandemic it was very difficult for all of us. We lost residents and co-workers and it was really hard to cope because of the bond that we develop with our residents and as co-workers. Thinking about it still makes me very sad.

I urge you to pass a bill that would significantly address and improve the funding and chronic staffing issues facing nursing home around the state. For too long we have managed to give care with nothing. Our residents deserve better. Please give workers like me the raise we deserve. Thank you for your time.