

Testimony of Jeff Baril, DSP/Mentor

John F. Murphy Homes, Inc.

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Testifying in Support of

L.D. 1573, *An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Study Long-Term Care Workforce Issues*

Hearing Date: May 3, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Jeff Baril, DSP/Mentor of John F. Murphy Homes in Auburn. I am testifying in support of L.D. 1573, *An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Study Long-Term Care Workforce Issues*.

I have been a DSP with John F. Murphy Homes for nearly 13 years. As I have been told numerous times, it takes a special kind of person to do the job that my fellow caregivers and I do. Some may think it is as simple as making sure the people we serve are alive and fed at the end of the day. Others take it as an opportunity to explore what they can find and offer to enhance the life of someone less fortunate than themselves.

Within my role of Mentor I teach, not only the people under my care, but those who care for them. When I started back in 2008, there was 21 people in my 2 week training class and the trainers had a difficult time physically fitting the class in a room. Working right through the pandemic between 70-80 hours a week, I've seen first-hand the downward trend of people wanting to join.

With conversations I've held with the leadership of my company, I know the formula for sustaining the annually increasing minimum wage is nearly impossible without any change. I don't do the financials for my company but even I can see the allocations of reimbursement does not filter down to a sustainable platform for a company to stand on, let alone thrive as it once was when I started.

My fear for the people I care for, is the need to reopen and rebuild institutions to sustain. In some cases having 10-15 in need of services under the care of a couple workers, because this is the only way to keep them fed and alive at the end of the day.

The strongest of DSPs have such care and empathy when working for such vulnerable people.

Unfortunately, the field is so undervalued that non-profit companies like mine and others within our state are struggling to make the workers happy. If the non-profits fall, the for-profits will send some of my residents back into institutions.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Baril

DSP/Mentor

John F. Murphy Homes