

Thomas Gilley
Spurwink

Monday, May 3, 2021

Good morning, Senator Claxton, Representative Myer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of LD 1573 An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Study Long-term Care Workforce Issues.

My name is Tom Gilley

Illustrate why supporting DSPs with 125% of minimum wage is needed by answering one or more of the following questions:

o What are the challenges for you to stay in this career field?

The lower wages paid to DSPs is a challenge for us as we work every day to provide care and safety to so many at need individuals. Despite having 25 years of experience and multiple degrees I am still paid less than an entry level worker at a fast food restaurant. This wage disparity is disheartening and speaks to not only the devaluation of us as individuals, but also the clients we serve each and every day.

I currently work 80-100 hours a week living with folks who need constant care. These extreme hours are gratifying in some ways and also exhausting physically and emotionally. Yet necessary to make a living wage. Those many hours are valuable and affect my family's quality of life and care.

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