

Johnna 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

The low wage currently paid to DSPs in Maine impacts my ability to thrive and my family's ability to grow and be successful. Despite having 25 years of experience in this field I am still paid less than an entry level worker at a fast food restaurant. The message sent to us as DSPs is clear, the work we do and the people we serve are not of value. I do not believe that the committee truly thinks this in their hearts, but it is how we are perceiving the situation. I currently work 80-100 hours a week in my current position. So many hours to garner a livable wage begs the question of where does my work life and personal life separate? Often it does not, but in order to take care of my family I must continue to work extremely long hours and live a life as best I can in between.

I value my work and the folks I am with each day. Obviously I do not do this solely for the money, but it is an important consideration for my future in this field. I hope that you will consider this wage increase as essential and important for us the workers, the people we serve, and our community.

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