

Testimony of *David Wilbur, Administrator*, 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 David Wilbur, *Administrator* 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 worked for John F. Murphy Homes the last 32 years. My first 2 years as a DSP and the last 30 and an Administrator supervising the DSP's working in the home. Early on all of my positions were always filled and if I had an opening it was quickly filled. That is no longer the case. I supervise 2 homes. 1 home has 4 full time positions with 1 full time opening. My other home has 10 full time positions and currently 3 full time openings for a total of 148 hours per week. The 3 gentlemen I support need skilled DSP's to provide care. I can't have just anyone come in to cover some of these openings I have. These hours are all covered by their regular staff. Having random DSP's covering open shifts is too disruptive to people's routine. Relationships need to be developed to develop trust, this is a big concern.

Raising wages (indexing to minimum wage) would help to retain current DSP's and attract new people with the skills and

Qualifications to provide excellent direct care to the people they are entrusted to care for.

Raising wages will help people provide for their families. New people can start out and support themselves and potentially develop long term relationships with the people they support.

Burn out is a byproduct of these DSP's working long and extra shifts. Providing emotional support and other needs causes stress. We cannot afford to lose any of our dedicated skilled DSP's we currently have.

DSP's tell me all the time they can make more money doing this and that. Yet most still continue to fill their DSP roles. They have developed these meaningful relationships that are so important to doing this work. Please raise wages so these dedicated people are retained and compensated for the valuable role they provide. And to have a starting wage to attract new people to come in and provide care to the ones we are entrusted with.

Respectfully submitted,

David Wilbur