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Health and Government Operations
Committee
Subcommittees

Health Occupations and Long Term Care
Public Health and Minority
Health Disparities

House Chair
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB189 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Provider
Agencies and Personal Care Aides - Reimbursement and Wage Reports
(Homecare Workers Employment Act of 2024)**

Hearing Date: March 20, 2024

Thank you Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier and members of the Finance Committee. I am Delegate Robbyn Lewis, testifying today on behalf of HB189. Homecare workers, also called Personal Care Workers, or Personal Care Assistants, are the backbone of our health delivery system, and yet, they are in short supply. This bill will improve hiring, retention and effective deployment of this vitally important, but heretofore ignored cadre

This bill is in the exact same posture as its Senate crossfile SB371. That bill passed the Senate by a vote of 34-12 on March 14th.

The bill works on the principle that what gets measured, matters.

This means wage transparency: provider agencies must report annually to the DOL the wage rates they are paying to homecare workers they employ. This measure ensures accountability and allows us to better address the needs of our homecare workforce.

The Maryland Department of Health will report to this Committee on its plan to operationalize the final federal Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services rule. This measure strengthens the State's commitment to plan, anticipate and allocate resources towards the needs of homecare services. By putting homecare workers first, this bill will bolster employment in the home care industry, enable more livable wages and ultimately, improve health care outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully request a favorable report for HB189.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Lewis', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Delegate Robbyn Lewis