

Good afternoon. My name is Akalu Tirfie. I work as a Passenger Service Agent for a contractor that services Southwest Airlines at BWI Airport. I help people with disabilities to get to their flights in time, and help them with their luggage.

I walk up to 12 miles a day, sometimes even running when a passenger is running late. My job is so physically exhausting that it's impossible for me to take on another job. This means my income always falls short.

In addition I'm left with physical problems like back pain. I'm also at higher risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19 because of my age, my high blood pressure and diabetes.

The health insurance that my employer has is so expensive that I can't afford it and must rely on Medicaid instead.

I am also struggling to pay my rent and provide for my family. I live paycheck to paycheck.

The Maryland secure wage act is the only remedy that would help me, my coworkers and our families.

Thank you.