



Testimony on SB761
Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers
Position: **FAVORABLE**

To Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee,

My name is Lucinda Duffin. I am a Certified Nursing Assistant at a Long-Term Care facility in Baltimore, and a member of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. Our union represents 10,000 healthcare workers across Maryland & DC. We urge a **favorable** report on SB761: Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers.

Low wages are one of the main reasons we have a short staffing crisis in Long-Term Care. On top of COVID19, short staffing makes our jobs incredibly difficult and for healthcare workers, and for many workers the wages just aren't worth the sacrifices to our health and wellbeing. One time I was helping to interview a candidate for a job at my facility. When I showed her the pay rate, she told me she would "be right back." I happened to look out the window overlooking the parking lot and saw her get in her car and drive away. We never heard from her again.

There are so many problems in Long-Term Care facilities because of short staffing. It is causing a lot of burnout, which is leading healthcare workers to quit and thereby making the short staffing crisis even worse for those of us who do stay. Right now, I am caring for seventeen patients at a time – almost double the number of patients I *should* be caring for. Burnout is hard on us at work and interferes with our home lives, but ultimately, it's the patients that suffer the most. Patients have to wait longer to get care, and when they do finally have someone stop by their room, we don't even have time to care for everyone as in-depth as they need because we have to get to all the other patients too.

I cannot emphasize this point strongly enough – **raising wages will recruit and retain more Long-Term Care workers and significantly reduce the short staffing crisis in our industry.** Pay healthcare workers what we are worth! We deserve to work with dignity and respect. Vote **yes** on SB761. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Lucinda Duffin
Delegate, 1199SEIU UHW E.
Baltimore City Resident