

Testimony on SB555: Fair Wage Act of 2023
Position: Favorable

Dear Chairperson Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Susan Allen and I live in Annapolis MD. I am a volunteer with the MD Poor People's Campaign—we have no paid staff—and our organization strongly supports HB549.

Personally, I am supporting this Fair Wage Act because three of my close relatives have worked as credentialed nurses and have struggled financially.

My niece Amanda currently is a community-based nurse, her mother Priscilla provided day care services, and my cousin Carol worked for years in nursing homes.

These women supported their families and one of them retired without enough money for secure housing. Her sister bought a house for my Carol cousin to live in. Carol is one of the 55% of Americans who have no savings at retirement.

I appreciate that this bill raises wages for community service providers working with people with disabilities and others who need personal care services.

Here's what I understood about this complicated bill:

These service providers will start earning \$15.00 an hour on October 1, 2023 and will get cost of living raises.

I know these service providers are grateful for these increases. As an ordinary citizen, I am too. If I need these services, I want my service providers to be fairly paid.

BUT in this expensive state, \$15.00 an hour is not a living wage.

Keep working to give these service providers safe and secure lives into retirement.

Respectfully submitted,

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