



Testimony on HB462  
The Nursing Home Staffing Crisis Act of 2024  
Position: **FAV**

To Chair Pena Melnyk and Members of the HGO Committee,

My name is Ernestine Pitt and I live in Baltimore City. I have been a geriatric nursing assistant for 47 years. I always had to work two jobs until recently. I have two children and trying to make sure I had money to send them both to college was very challenging for me. Instead, I sacrificed my physical and mental wellbeing as I worked two jobs as a GNA and a food service worker in order to provide for my children.

When I first started working in nursing homes in 1977, there were a lot of older adults and seniors. But now, the residents are younger and often have various needs that have challenging needs that require more staff time. We used to work with 40 residents and only have 5 staff to work with those residents. Now, they have increased the number of residents but with the same or less staff than before. When someone calls out sick, the burden is even greater on staff. Now, a lot of residents who need total care needs or have mental health and behavioral health needs that require far more attention and time from staff.

This legislation is important because it makes the needed investment into staffing and direct care that patients and workers need. I have been working at the same nursing home for the past 40 years and the owner has changed 6 or 7 times. When management changes, staffing is always the first change and it is often cut in order to save money for the nursing home.

HB462 will improve transparency of how skilled nursing facilities spend money and protect quality of care. For these reasons, I urge legislators to issue a favorable report on the Nursing Home Staffing Crisis Funding Act because Medicaid funding which is public tax payer dollars should go towards investing in the direct care workforce. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

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