



Building a Just Society

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**HB1129: Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Provider Agencies -
Wages and Leave for Personal Care Aides**

House Health Committee, March 3, 2025

Position: FAVORABLE

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization which seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Workplace Justice Project works to expand and enforce the right of low-wage workers to receive an honest day's pay for an honest day's work in a safe, equitable workplace. **The PJC supports HB1129, which would increase the minimum wage and provide paid sick leave for personal care aides.**

Maryland is experiencing a shortage of personal care aides. The turnover rate in the home care industry was nearly 75% in 2024.¹ The Maryland Association of Community Services has reported that one in three providers reported a direct support vacancy rate between 30% and 58%.² There is a dire need to attract more workers to this industry.

According to a recent study, wage and salary is the second-most important factor to low-wage workers in selecting a career, second only to location and commute.³ This same study found that Personal Care and Service was an ideal career for only 3.2% of low-wage workers.⁴ Increasing wages in the home care industry is crucial to attracting and retaining workers. Stabilization of the workforce will benefit care recipients through more reliable access to care workers.

For these reasons, the PJC **SUPPORTS HB1129** and urges a **FAVORABLE** report. Should you have any questions, please call Sam Williamson at 410-625-9409 ext. 234.

¹ *Understanding the Direct Care Workforce*, PHI, <https://www.phinational.org/policy-research/key-facts-faq> (last visited Feb. 27, 2026).

² Elizabeth Shwe, *Home Care for Older Adults Increased During COVID, but Direct Care Workers Remain Hard to Find*, Maryland Matters (Oct. 7, 2021), <https://marylandmatters.org/2021/10/07/home-care-for-older-adults-increased-during-covid-but-direct-care-workers-remain-hard-to-find/>.

³ Joseph B. Fuller, et al., *Navigating Opportunity: Career Information and Mobility in Low-Wage Employment*, The Project on Workforce at Harvard (Apr. 2025), <https://www.pw.hks.harvard.edu/post/navigating-opportunity-career-information-and-mobility-in-low-wage-employment>.

⁴ *Id.*