



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 Rhonda White. I am a certified medicine aide at Forest Haven Nursing Home in Baltimore County and a Delegate for 1199SEIU. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the United States, with over 10,000 members in Maryland and DC. I am testifying to support SB761: Funding Increases for Medical Provider Workers. This bill would help fix the staffing crisis in nursing homes by increasing wages for caregivers like me.

Nursing home workers are essential. We have a big responsibility, and there just is not enough staff. Due to the pandemic, staffing shortages are a major problem. I am here because I have to advocate for my residents, and I am worried. The staff-to-patient ratios are very high, which leaves our licenses in jeopardy and can cause injury and harm to the patient. More staff means better patient care.

With all the money being given to the nursing homes by the federal government, our wages should be higher, but we're not receiving that money. Raising wages will retain healthcare workers and give us better staffing. Essential workers like me, we don't do the work for the love of the money. We do it because we love our residents. But the prices for everything we need are just going up; bread, water, gas, everything. Money helps us to survive, and we need all the help we can get.

The world changed with the pandemic. People have been dying and having more mental illness, and essential workers like me are still there, showing up for the residents we care so much about. Wages need to be raised so we can take care of others properly, and also ourselves. If essential workers' wages can be raised, staffing can improve, and we can give proper care to our patients. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Rhonda White