



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 Ditanya Rosebud. I'm a Delegate in 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the biggest healthcare workers union in the United States, with over 10,000 of us in Maryland and DC. I work as a Dietary Aide at a Long-Term Care facility in Baltimore. My coworkers and I strongly urge this committee to pass SB761: Funding for Wage increases for Medical Provider Workers. Please issue a **favorable** report.

The number one biggest problem for healthcare workers and our patients in my facility is short staffing. **We are only supposed to work with 14 patients per shift. Right now, the staffing ratio is 28 residents per healthcare worker per shift.** We are not getting paid any wage increases despite the fact that we are doing double the work! Short staffing and low wages are so severe that just this week **an entire department quit on the same day because they found jobs that would pay them higher wages.** We are now down five GNAs, one RN, and one CNA so far. I'm sure there are more resignations coming because my workers are sick and tired of being overworked and underpaid. Every time a healthcare worker quits, short staffing gets worse, which leads more healthcare workers to quit.

Myself and others have been forced to do overtime and to do tasks that are not in our job descriptions because there just aren't enough healthcare workers. Forced overtime on top of our patient load being doubled makes us burn out and makes people more likely to quit. Doing work that is not in our job description also puts our jobs at risk. For example, if the only GNA on shift is in a patient room, and another patient calls for help because they fell in the hallway and someone from dietary is in the hallway, the dietary worker would be required to help the patient up. But if the patient was somehow injured in that process, the dietary worker would be held at fault and fired.

Management is doing nothing to help us. They keep the facility short staffed and refuse to pay us more, then blame us when there are problems and give us even more work. Instead of lending a hand, management hides in their offices all day while the workers and patients struggle. Management will not raise our wages out of the goodness of their hearts, that is why we need YOU our elected officials to pass this legislation to raise our wages NOW!

It's sad and angering that throughout the COVID19 pandemic, we didn't get wage increases and we didn't get hazard pay. **Raising wages will help motivate healthcare workers to stay in our jobs to provide our patients with high quality care.** Make no mistake, just like the COVID19 pandemic, **SHORT STAFFING IS AN EMERGENCY!** Vote **YES** on SB761, we are depending on you.

Sincerely,

Ditanya Rosebud
Delegate, 1199SEIU
Baltimore City Resident