



Testimony on SB761
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Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers
Position: **FAVORABLE**

To Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee,

My name is Sophia Atu. I'm a healthcare worker and a member of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, Maryland/DC. Our union is the biggest in the United States, representing over 10,000 healthcare workers in the Mid-Atlantic region. We support SB761: Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers and request the Committee vote **favorably** on this legislation.

We healthcare providers work so hard, especially during COVID19. We are making a lot of personal sacrifices, and our wages don't reflect that. We need to earn more. Healthcare workers keep quitting. **Short staffing is actually the biggest problem in healthcare right now**, almost even more than COVID19 itself, because we can't provide high quality care for our patients. If healthcare workers earned higher wages, we wouldn't have workers quitting at the highest rate I've ever seen in my many years as a healthcare worker.

The cost of living is at an all-time high right now, but our wages are remaining the same. It makes me feel so disrespected that I take care of patients, but I can't even afford to take care of my own family. Most of my coworkers and I have to work 2-3 jobs just to keep food on the table. So in addition to the demanding work in healthcare facilities and low wages, working more than one job is making healthcare worker burnout even more severe. The workers, our families, and the patients suffer when we have to work multiple jobs. We can't keep living like this.

When healthcare workers earn more money, everyone benefits. Please vote yes on SB761 to raise wages for medical provider workers.

Sincerely,

Sophia Atu
Member, 1199SEIU

[County/Region] Resident