



## Testimony for HB 462

### Nursing Home Staffing Crisis Funding Act of 2024

Position: **FAV**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and members of the Health, Government, and Operations Committee:

My name is Carolyn Taylor-Chester and I have been working as Geriatric Nursing Assistant at Long Term Care Facility for over 30 years. I am also a member of 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. I support HB 462 because I believe direct care workers in nursing homes deserve better and this bill will make sure nursing homes are spending their money on care.

I feel overworked and I am burnt out. Recently, I had 38 residents working with just one other GNA. I am so frustrated because I do not want to come into work where I am treated the way I am. We need management to ensure that there is enough staffing. The staffing crisis cannot be solved by management giving us some Chinese food and pizza to show their “appreciation”. I don’t feel appreciated or respected. We need legislation like this to hold nursing homes accountable.

We are not making much more than minimum wage. I can easily go work for Walmart or Amazon which pays more less stressed, but I love what I do. I have 4 grandchildren and I work so that I can continue to provide for my children and grandchildren. I have arthritis and gout and my work schedule barely lets me take care of myself. During the pandemic and now we sacrificed our own health to come into work to take care of people who were vulnerable. Even this past December, I was out for a whole month with stomach flu and UTI that I got from residents and co-workers who were sick.

I have been doing this work for over 30 years because I enjoy connecting with the residents and getting to know them. I go above and beyond what I am paid to make sure our residents are safe and cared for. There are so many unexpected things that can happen to us and our loved ones that make us face the reality of relying on nursing homes for care. Maryland needs to invest in our long-term care system.

I support HB 462 because I believe nursing home facilities can do more to make sure direct care workers are not burnt out. This bill will ensure the care force needed to take care of the residents are supported. We just want to be appreciated for the work we do. We deserve more. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Tayler-Chester