

June 24, 2011

The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.
U.S. Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Linda T. Sanchez
U. S. House of Representatives
1222 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Casey and Congresswoman Sanchez:

Thank you for introducing the Direct Care Job Quality Improvement Act – which offers long-awaited solutions to many of the problems facing direct care workers. As organizations representing the various constituencies that either depend on or recognize the important role of direct care workers – home care aides, personal care attendants, personal assistants, nursing assistants, and direct support professionals – we appreciate your dedication to this workforce and the people they care for.

Direct care workers are fundamental to the health, autonomy and well-being of more than 13 million Americans today and more than 27 million who will depend on their care and services in the coming years. But too often we see poor working conditions lead to high turnover in this workforce, jeopardizing the quality of care provided to those who need it most. The Direct Care Job Quality Improvement Act seeks to remedy a major failing in current labor law that excludes nearly two million home care workers from federal minimum wage and overtime protections. In addition, we support the additional provisions that strengthen data collection and workforce monitoring and improves recruitment and retention by providing grants to states to implement initiatives to improve compensation, training and career ladder opportunities for direct care workers.

Thank you for your efforts to help create a more stable, valued direct care workforce and improve the quality of care for millions of Americans. We appreciate your commitment to improving the long-term care system in this country and look forward to continuing to work with your offices in support of the Direct Care Job Quality Improvement Act.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women
A Better Balance: The Work & Family Legal Center
AFL-CIO
AFSCME
Alliance for Retired Americans
Alpha One

Alzheimer's Foundation of America
American Geriatrics Society
Arizona Direct Care Worker Association
Brazilian Immigrant Center
Break the Chain Campaign at IPS
Campaign for Community Change
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Action Partnership
Cooperative Care
Council on Social Work Education
Direct Care Alliance
Families USA
Family Values @ Work
Florida Professional Association of Care Givers
Food Chain Workers Alliance
Great Livin' LLC
Health Care for America Now
Interfaith Worker Justice
Jobs with Justice
Maine Women's Lobby
MataHari: Eye of the Day
National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals
National Association of Direct Care Workers of Color
National Council of La Raza
National Council on Aging
National Day Laborer Organizing Network
National Domestic Workers Alliance/ La Alianza Nacional de Trabajadores del Hogar
National Employment Law Project
National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce Action Fund
National Partnership for Women & Families
NCB Capital Impact
New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition
Pathways PA
Pennsylvania Direct Care Workers Association
PHI
Philipino Workers Center
Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
SEIU
Taxi Workers Alliance of Pennsylvania
The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
USAction

Washington Community Action Network
Washtenaw County Workers' Center
Wider Opportunities for Women
Wisconsin Direct Caregiver Alliance