

May 4, 2023

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Hello, my name is Douglas M. West Jr. I am a Medicaid Waiver recipient in Clermont County, Ohio. I have agoraphobia and do not leave my apartment alone very often. I have major back issues and so I must depend on an aide to clean and do homemaking for me. I walk with a cane short distance. I have a wheelchair for longer distances. Mostly the only time I get out of the house is to go to the doctor's office.

I was without an aide on and off for 3 years until I found a friend who would help me. This friend is especially important to me as a friend and as an aide. However, he will be leaving soon to pursue a job that pays better because he has a family to support. These people are entrusted with the young and elderly, but we cannot give them enough money to keep doing the job once the aide is here. If aides are not given a good wage for our county and state of Ohio, the elderly and disabled will be filling up the nursing homes faster than you can build them. But then, the problem will still be that there is no one to take the jobs of caring for all these people. Then here we sit in the same position as before; not having help at all or good help because the state does not value its people enough to pay them a good competitive wage to help our disabled and elderly. Clermont County has a lot of people who cannot get aides since Senior Services left the county.

People need to make a good living wage. Period. People cannot afford to work a job for 11 to 13 dollars an hour when they can go to McDonalds or White Castle and flip burgers for more money. I would not. They need better pay and benefits. They have families and children to care for. We need to provide our citizens with a reason to do a job.

It is hard to get quality people to commit to this kind of job when it does not pay. Most of them do not make enough to cover their gas to drive to Clermont County. IF they do, they will not want to run any errands once they get here. I understand that job vacancies are hard to fill. You cannot fill this job vacancy if you are not willing to give Medicaid providers a good wage and a way to make a profit.

There are many ways to make the pay raises possible. I highly suggest you cut down on Medicaid Fraud in order to pay for these people's salaries. Quit paying so much overhead to

Directors and boards. They could accept less money. But I digress.

I do not want to have to go to a nursing home and die because you all cannot make a way to provide aides and to pay them a good wage to do their especially important job of caring for the elderly and disabled who cannot care for themselves.

I hope this personal letter helps in my endeavor to help secure a good wage for good employees.

Thank you.

Douglas M. West Jr.