

June 11, 2015



BECKY WILLIAMS
President

AL BACON
Secretary-Treasurer

KATHY MCCORMICK
Executive Vice President

FRANK HORNICK
Executive Vice President

PENNY BURCHETT
Kentucky Vice President

PETE HANLON
Ohio State Vice President

DEBBIE HAJZAK
Ohio Public Vice President

CAROL FORD
Ohio Private Vice President

CAROL LAFFERTY
West Virginia Vice President

JUDY MALDONADO
RN Vice President

LYNN RADCLIFFE
School District & Local
Government Vice President

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Coley, Ranking Member Skindell, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, on behalf of the members of SEIU District 1199, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding Amended Sub-House Bill 64 as an interested party.

As Ohio's preeminent healthcare union, and both providers and consumers of healthcare, SEIU 1199 members are uniquely situated to discuss healthcare issues. We believe that expanding consumer choice for those who prefer to receive care services in their own homes and maintain a level of autonomy elevates the overall quality of care and of life for the most vulnerable Ohioans.

The Kasich Administration has made a commitment to keeping individuals in need of care in their homes and communities, rather than institutionalized settings. According to the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute (PHI), this directive has led to home care aides becoming one of Ohio's fastest growing occupations, growing at more than five times the rate of overall jobs in the economy.

Despite the increasing demand for home care services, the past few months have brought a myriad of proposals from the administration that will effectively eliminate independent health care provider option for consumers. By threatening to phase out their provider agreements in HB 64, reducing their pay rates through administrative rule and silencing their voice by Executive Order, independent home care providers have been sent a strong message that they will be forced out of their jobs and away from clients they care about and who trust them.

We strongly support an amendment put forth by the entire Senate Democratic Caucus to reestablish the rights of these workers to collectively bargain. This volatile and uncertain time for Ohio's home care providers and consumers reinforces the need for home care workers to organize in hopes of strengthening their ability to fight for better wages, benefits and increased quality of service to Ohio's seniors and people with disabilities.

SEIU 1199 thanks the sponsors of this amendment for their willingness to stand up for these selfless, dedicated workers. We urge members of the Senate Finance Committee to restore the collective bargaining rights of independent home care providers to promote consumer choice and a higher quality of care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Becky Williams".

Becky Williams
President, SEIU District 1199 WV/KY/OH

The Service Employees
International Union
District 1199 WV/KY/OH
Change to Win, CLC
www.seiu1199.org



