

Submitted testimony

Joint Legislative Public Budget Hearing

Workforce Development

February 3, 2016

Testimony on behalf of Shirley Newsome,

Home Health Attendant

Hello, my name is Shirley Newsome. I have been a homecare worker since 2010. I left my previous job during the Great Recession. I was out of work for 9 months during which time my unemployment ran out. I vowed to take the first job I saw and was qualified for. I was attracted to the job because it gave me the opportunity to help people. Helping people makes me feel rewarded. I take a great deal of pride in the work that I do.

I work mainly with the elderly and I feel the quality of care I provides can be seen in the smiles on the faces of my clients. I guess that comes from my mother, who taught me to always strive for excellence in my work.

From the very beginning, I wanted to be there for the fight for \$15. I guess it's the fight in me. I like to care for people, and I also feel I have a little bit of advocate inside. I went to a meeting, and met a lot of people who were in the same situation I was in. We like to help people, but it's tough to make ends meet. It's hard to pay your bills, and if your car breaks down, oh my God!

When I heard about the Fight For \$15 I was on board. If we win \$15, the first thing I'd do is to catch up on bills. Getting rid of my old bills would help me start fresh. Making \$10 an hour really hurts you credit because you can't keep up with bills. The first thing I would do with a raise is restore my good credit."