

My name is Faigie Horowitz and I work for a medium size home care company downstate called Caring Professionals. The demand for qualified home care was established before the pandemic, but the need has only increased. In fact, the state Department of Labor in 2018 predicted the home health aide occupation would see a 66 percent rise in employment over the next 10 years — the second-highest projected increase.

The median annual earnings for NYS home care workers presently is \$22,000, with 54 % relying on Medicaid and other benefits. Clearly this is below the poverty line.

This has resulted in high turnover and an inadequate supply for those seniors who choose the proven healthier option of aging in place, despite the current institutional bias in the DOH regulations.

A study released in July showed 5,100 home health aides in the Hudson Valley leave the job each year because of the meager pay. But if working conditions were improved, the fast-growing sector could serve as a boost to the economy.

A CUNY report from its Labor and Urban Studies Program at the Graduate Center has just found that if the minimum salary of home health aides was increased to \$35,000, it would not only lift them out of poverty, but generate new jobs and revenue.

Specifically, Medicaid spending would decrease by over \$400 million while generating \$286 million in new income tax revenue; \$63.7 million in new sales tax revenue; and nearly \$4.6 billion in “economic spillover.”

To expedite those efforts, Senator Rachel May and Assemblyman Richard Gottfried are cosponsoring the Fair Pay for Home Care Act, (which would require all home care workers to be paid at least \$35,000 annually.) I urge you to support it and reimburse providers at a sustainable level.

**Faigie Horowitz, MS**

Director

Marketing and Communication

Caring Professionals, Inc.

(917) 935-2088



[fhorowitz@caringprof.com](mailto:fhorowitz@caringprof.com)

<http://linkedin.com/in/faigiehorowitz>

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