

Kim Alleyne – Workforce Development Hearing – January 31, 2022

My name is Kim Alleyne, I live in the Bronx. I'm a mother, a grandmother and a great grandmother. I came here to the United States from Guyana 18 years ago. I've been working with seniors for over 20 years and have been doing home care work for 14 years at Cooperative Home Care Associates. I'm an 1199 union delegate. I'm here to talk about the need for Fair Pay for Home Care.

Why I became a home health aide. I fell in love with this work from taking care of my mom. And I realized there were so many other people in the same situation. So, I put aside my career as a leading fire woman to take care of seniors.

As home care workers, we are the ears and the eyes of the care team. We keep patients out of the hospital, at home. I've been with my 97-year-old client for 10 years - he has never gone to the hospital because I try my very best. When I first started with my client, he would have 2 boiled egg and cup of tea. He only weighed 103 pounds. I observed and realized this wasn't enough food and he needed to change his diet. I started to give him more food, more fresh fruits. He has a good appetite now. He now weighs 121. This is one example of many of how home care keeps people healthy and prevents illness. **Prevention is better than the cure.**

And yet we are treated like we are nothing. I make just \$15/hour living in New York City. I have to work 6 days a week Monday-Saturday and the money comes into your hand and straight out. I pay 1900 a month for rent - plus utilities, phone bill, transportation, clothes, shoes for winter. I'll be 66 in 4 months - when will I be able to save for retirement OR afford the airfare to visit my grandchildren in Guyana.

I have diabetes and hypertension - for me to stay healthy to do this kind of work - I have to eat right, many times you can't get food you are supposed to eat cause of price. Sometimes my granddaughter will go to the pantry to get emergency food for us while I'm at work.

People are living longer and there is a growing need for home care workers - but for us to do a good job- we have to be taken care of too I'm here fighting for fair Pay for Home Care for myself, but also for the many other home care workers (*immigrants, woman and people of color*) who are struggling to survive doing such important work. We've been forgotten for too long. When you are making the budget, I need you to remember us.

It's time you all step up to the plate.

