

SB2012 Committee Members:

My name is Tami Barry and I have owned Tami's Angels Inc. for 36 years. We provide personal non medical care, and we offer up to seven days a week 24 hours a day. A large portion of our client base comes from HCBS. These wonderful folks are people that deserve and wish to stay in their own homes, have people available that are qualified to come in and help them with their most personal needs. Thanks to programs HCBS has to offer, the days of facing the nursing home as being your only option is no longer the case. These programs have allowed the disability community and the aging community choices. It can be grim for many or most to have the only option be in a long term care facility with a room and possibly a shared room.

The employees that agencies like mine hire, are the same employees skills that the nursing home requires. That is important in this discussion because long term care pays several more dollars per hour then what the legislature has allowed for funding those that want to remain as independent as possible in their own homes. The work that is provided by the non-medical staff is often referred to as the CNA's, is difficult, physically demanding, and can be exhausting. It is also rewarding, fulfilling, and something that allows you to be a part of watching someone live their best life as a disabled or aging individual.

Currently, as an agency, we are reimbursed \$7.48 for every 15 minutes that we work. That comes to \$29.92 per hour. Out of that reimbursement, payroll, liability insurance, continuing education, workman's comp, unemployment, and benefits not to mention overhead in management. Long term care or nursing homes pay CNA'S hourly as much as \$23 to \$27.00 per hour. Agencies like mine cannot compete with long term care even though the staff do the exact same work. I refuse to take on clients when I am faced with hiring less quality because we can't pay what the nursing home can pay. There are folks waiting for providers like me to be able to staff qualified, dependable and skilled individuals to provide their care. Non skill employment in the Fargo area pays \$17 per hour in a lot of cases. How do we compete?

I am requesting that the opportunity for agencies like mine to be able to offer competitive pay, be strongly considered. Our staff deserve it, they deserve to be offered the same benefits that long term care can offer, and we need to be able to continue to provide the very important services in the homes of the disabled and aging population of North Dakota.

Respectfully,

Tami Barry
Tami's Angels, Inc.