

113TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 532

Designating the week beginning September 7, 2014, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 31, 2014

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating the week beginning September 7, 2014, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”.

Whereas direct care workers, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers, and paraprofessionals (referred to in this preamble as “direct support professionals”) are the primary providers of publicly-funded long-term support and services for millions of individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals must build a close, respectful, and trusted relationship with individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals assist individuals with disabilities with intimate personal care assistance on a daily basis;

Whereas direct support professionals provide a broad range of individualized support, including—

- (1) preparation of meals;
- (2) helping with medications;
- (3) assisting with bathing and dressing;
- (4) assisting individuals with physical disabilities with access to their environment;
- (5) providing transportation to school, work, religious, and recreational activities; and
- (6) helping with general aspects of daily living, such as financial matters, medical appointments, and personal interests;

Whereas direct support professionals provide essential support to help keep individuals with disabilities connected to family, friends, and community;

Whereas direct support professionals support individuals with disabilities in making choices that lead to meaningful, productive lives;

Whereas direct support professionals are the key to helping individuals with disabilities to live successfully in the community, and to avoid more costly institutional care;

Whereas the participation of direct support professionals in medical care planning is critical to the successful transition from medical events to post-acute care and long-term support and services;

Whereas the majority of direct support professionals are the primary financial providers for their families and often work multiple jobs to make ends meet;

Whereas direct support professionals are a critical element in supporting individuals who are receiving health care services for severe chronic health conditions and individuals with with functional limitations;

Whereas while direct support professionals work and pay taxes, many direct support professionals earn poverty-level wages and are therefore eligible for the same Federal and State public assistance programs on which individuals with disabilities served by direct support professionals must also depend;

Whereas Federal and State policies assert the right of certain individuals with a disability to live in a residential setting in the community, or an institutional setting of their choice, and the Supreme Court of the United States, in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999), confirmed that right for certain individuals;

Whereas, as of 2014, the majority of direct support professionals are employed in home and community-based settings and this majority is projected to increase over the next decade;

Whereas there is a documented and increasing critical shortage of direct support professionals throughout the United States; and

Whereas many direct support professionals are forced to leave their jobs due to inadequate wages and benefits and limited opportunities for advancement, creating demonstrated high turnover and vacancy rates, which adversely affect the quality of support and the safety and health of individuals with disabilities: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) designates the week beginning September 7,
2 2014, as “National Direct Support Professionals
3 Recognition Week”;

4 (2) recognizes the dedication of direct support
5 professionals and the vital role direct support profes-
6 sionals have in enhancing the lives of individuals
7 with disabilities of all ages;

8 (3) appreciates the contribution of direct sup-
9 port professionals in supporting individuals with dis-
10 abilities and their families in the United States;

11 (4) identifies direct support professionals as in-
12 tegral to long-term support and services for individ-
13 uals with disabilities; and

14 (5) finds that the successful implementation of
15 the public policies affecting individuals with disabili-
16 ties in the United States depends on the dedication
17 of direct support professionals.

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