

Thank you for this time. I am Ashley Cesario, a Home Care Worker in Klamath Falls. 2 years ago you heard us and the cries of the voiceless, whom we represent, and fortified our services. With expanded hours and more workers who were properly trained to fight this virus we were able to form a human shield for the vulnerable, keeping them safely in their homes. YOU saved lives with the foresight of that choice. However, our casualties are also devastating.

Dee, a caregiver mom, and Dawn, her severely impaired adult daughter, sounded the alarm. Dee, was sick. Dawn remained without symptoms as Dee did her best to care for her child and not infect her. DHS told the other caregivers to stay away. But Dawn has the mentality of a small child and Oregon caregivers are not made of such weak metal as to leave her alone now, with no caregivers. Donning what PPE she could gather for herself a brave and selfless caregiver took them to the doctor. It was Covid. Dee refused to risk her child or anyone else a moment longer. An emergency call was made to her son, who rushed to collect his beloved sister. Dee insisted she quarantine alone and sent her kids to safety. Mere hours after Dawn was rescued by her brother, Dee died in her home, her worksite. She was found by another caregiver who went to check on her.

That is what is still happening to us. We face off against mortal danger daily, sometimes in makeshift armor. We try to save as many as we can and for the most part we are wildly successful in protecting our consumers. But also, we die. We die at work and find our friends dead at work. And then have to keep going to work. Not seeming scared. With a brave face and sometimes a terrified heart we continue to care for the forgotten, the helpless, the elderly and the impaired. And now we are exhausted in a way that I didn't know people could survive. But still we work.

I make \$16.27 an hour. We deserve adequate compensation for the battle we are still waging at our jobs. Washington State caregivers were given hazard differentials of \$2.56 an hour for 2020 and \$2.54 for 2021. In Virginia they received a \$1500.00 payout MONTHS ago.

We deserve a significant raise to 21.00 an hour, permanently. We have long been one of the most underpaid workforces in the state and still we rose like phoenixes to the occasion. This work is hard, dangerous and heartbreaking. We need to afford decent housing, reliable cars and desperately needed vacations. We have more than earned a hazard bonus, too. Please, do not try to save for a rainy day when it is still pouring on us.

You made the smart choice 2 years ago. We aren't an essential service....we are a LIFESAVING service. Commit to continuing to expand and improve home care in the state of Oregon. Everyone benefits. Thank you for your consideration.