

Submitter: Greg Watson
On Behalf Of: SB646
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure: SB646

To whom it may concern,

I am the father of a special needs child. My wife has been working as his personal support worker. With the passing of senate bill 646 she will be able to continue to do so. Our son has benefited greatly with her being able to do this. As many of the parents can testify to, there are so many reasons why a mother, or (father) really are the best support worker. Who better knows all the quirks, different facial expressions, or behavioral problems that our child has. Our son is non verbal, so he is unable to tell us when something is wrong, or something hurts. Our son has a habit of grabbing things off the counter and dropping them, or putting them in his mouth when you least expect it. He is quick as a ninja and it never fails he will find something. It is this kind of behavior that will take years of training for someone to be able to anticipate his needs and habits before he either has become ill, or hurts himself. When you bring someone in and have to train them all of these things they will never truly be able to have the skill set that my wife has. The amount of personal care that a parent can give their child will always be one step above the care that someone else can give. It's not a question of whether or not the other person could be professional or hard working, but the question of the level of care that a parent can give that comes from the heart. When special needs children are 18 they are able to hire the parent or guardian to be their care giver. I would like you to ask yourself truly "why wouldn't you grant the same level of care to a minor with the same difficulties as they would have (if not more) as an adult? This is the time when it could be even more crucial. Our son has multiple doctors appointments and therapies on a daily basis. Taking care of him is a full time job, and from the time that he gets up in the morning to the time that he goes to bed at night, he needs constant supervision. He needs watched to make sure that he doesn't hurt himself, he needs help to wipe his nose, he needs assistance eating, getting in his chair, bathing, getting in and out of his car seat. He needs assistance bathing, getting dressed, putting his hearing aids in. There is not a thing that he does throughout the day that he doesn't need help doing. This is not an easy job for anyone and can be quite trying at times, but my wife does this and doesn't hardly complain because it is what needs to be done for him. But there are those out there that say she should have to find a stranger to come in and do all these things for her because she can't be his hired care giver? When you are hiring a new employee for a job, the goal is always to hire the best candidate for the job. From an employer stand point, that is the most productive and economical choice. When you have a person interviewing for a chef position for a five star french restaurant, and one candidate has worked as a cook at a hole in the wall diner for years, and the other candidate has worked as a cook at a

four star french restaurant for years and knows how to make numerous fine course meals, which candidate would you choose? The candidate that can probably burn water, or the one that will bring in good reviews and make your business successful? I think that the goal of of a personal support worker is to provide the best care possible for the child that can't care for themselves. By allowing a parent to be the care giver this would provide just that. I ask you to pass bill 646 and give the ability to the parent to be the paid caregiver for their child and give our children the chance to get the best care they can have.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Greg Watson