

Submitter: Leslie Andrews

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5547

Chairs Campos and Valderrama, Members of the Committee,

My name is Leslie Andrews, and I am Tensy's grandmother. I'm 73 years old and a retired social worker.

Every few months, I move in with my daughter and son-in-law to help care for Tensy, who is medically fragile. I'm a paid caregiver through the state. I assist with his Activities of Daily Living—things like positioning, hygiene, and meals. But I am never alone with him. Never.

Why? Because his care is complex and unpredictable. He can go into medical crisis at any time. I often have to wake his Dad in the middle of the night to suction his airway. I can't transfer him on my own. I rely on Tensy's parents to guide me through almost everything. And one of them always has to be home. Always.

And yet—I am paid for this labor. But they are not.

This is work. It's physically demanding. It's emotionally taxing. It requires constant alertness, skill, and training. And Tensy's parents do far more of it than I do—every single day, around the clock.

So I have to ask you: How is it that I can be paid to support this work, but they can't? They are not optional to his care. They are essential. The state says they are "legally responsible," but that doesn't make the labor disappear—it just makes it invisible and unpaid.

Lifting the ban on paying legally responsible caregivers isn't an additional cost. It's a recognition of the very real, very hard work that is already happening, work essential to keeping these children in their homes and communities.

Please, fix this.

Thank you for your time