



PHI QUALITY CARE
THROUGH
QUALITY JOBS

September 16, 2019

The Honorable Robert “Bobby” Scott
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Education and Labor
Washington, DC 20515

We are thrilled to support The Direct Creation, Advancement, and Retention of Employment (CARE) Opportunity Act, which will strengthen the direct care workforce by investing in recruitment, retention, and advancement opportunities across the country. This proposed legislation encourages workforce innovations at the state and local level, and among national advocates, drawing on our sector’s wisdom to boost investment in this critical workforce.

Direct care workers are the paid frontline of long-term care in this country, providing critical, daily support to millions of older people and people with disabilities—a rapidly growing demographic. Despite their profound value, direct care workers struggle in poor-quality jobs—as evidenced by low compensation, insufficient training, and limited career paths, among other factors—driving many of them out of the industry. By 2026, the long-term care industry will need to fill 7.8 million jobs in direct care—a sizable need created by workers who retire, exit the labor force, or leave the field for other industries, often because of poor-quality jobs. The Direct CARE Opportunity Act would help address this need, while elevating the value of direct care workers in the health and long-term care sectors, and in our economy.

The Direct CARE Opportunity Act also acknowledges that direct care workforce interventions are needed in all parts of the country, from rural to urban areas, and that these approaches will vary to meet local context. The bill rightfully places the responsibility for innovation in the capable hands of local, state, and national leaders to imagine concrete direct care workforce solutions for their communities. An effective, national approach to strengthening the direct care workforce will benefit from the imagination and involvement of diverse leaders nationwide.

Sincerely,

Jodi M. Sturgeon
President, PHI

Cc: Robert Espinoza, Vice President of Policy, PHI