

SAY “NO” TO THE CONSUMER WORKFORCE COUNCIL

CONCERNS:

The state is proposing to create a state-run homecare agency so that seniors and individuals with disabilities may remain at home and access direct care workers and workers may have an opportunity to receive better wages and health care benefits.

The fact is that consumers *already have* the right to stay at home and the resources to help them find homecare workers and the state controls reimbursement rates for this workforce. Another state bureaucracy would:

- **Reduce choices for consumers.** Homecare workers employed by their relatives, friends, or neighbors often have full-time jobs other than homecare work, a duty they may perform just a few hours a week. They don’t want to join a state-run agency.
- **Cost the state and counties taxpayer money.** With a CWC, we would pay *more* money to change a system that *already works*—and in doing so, create unfair competition for private industry and a barrier between consumers and workers.
- **Wipe out the consumer-directed model that PA has worked hard to establish.** People with disabilities and older Pennsylvanians fought hard to obtain and protect the authority to hire and manage their homecare workers and to be exempt from onerous government regulation.
- **Mandate requirements for workers that are too restrictive.** A worker who doesn’t want to work for multiple consumers may choose to stop working rather than spend hours in the training programs that would be required. This would include family and friends.

RECOMMENDATION:

Oppose the creation of a state-run home care agency. While we agree that consumer must have a choice in how and where they receive their long-term care and direct care workers should be paid a livable wage and have access to health care benefits, the creation of a state bureaucracy does not do anything except increase costs.

- **Annual reimbursement rate increases:** Reimbursement for in-home personal care and attendant care has been woefully inadequate; equating to low salaries for workers.
- **Access to health care:** Give direct care workers priority status under the adultBasic health insurance program
- **Make personal care an entitlement under the Medicaid plan:** To rebalance the long-term care system and provide consistent hours for this workforce we must provide consumers with “real” choices of who cares for them and where they receive the care by allowing them to spend down at home and access personal care services through Medicaid.

The CWC is an unnecessary, state-run agency that takes away control from people with disabilities and older Pennsylvanians.