

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 548

Designating the week beginning September 9, 2012, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 11, 2012

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating the week beginning September 9, 2012, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”.

Whereas direct support professionals, direct care workers, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers, and paraprofessionals (referred to in this preamble as “direct support professionals”) are the primary providers of publicly funded long term supports and services for millions of individuals with disabilities;

Whereas a direct support professional must build a close, trusted relationship with an individual with disabilities;

Whereas a direct support professional assists an individual with disabilities with the most intimate needs on a daily basis;

Whereas direct support professionals perform a broad range of activities for individuals with disabilities, including preparing meals, managing medications, bathing, dressing, helping with mobility, providing transportation to school, work, and religious and recreational activities, and helping with general daily affairs;

Whereas a direct support professional provides essential support to help keep an individual with disabilities connected to the family and community of the individual;

Whereas direct support professionals enable individuals with disabilities to live meaningful, productive lives;

Whereas direct support professionals are the key to allowing an individual with disabilities to live successfully in the community and avoid more costly institutional care;

Whereas the majority of direct support professionals are female, and many are the sole breadwinners of their families;

Whereas, although direct support professionals work and pay taxes, many are impoverished and are eligible for the same Federal and State public assistance programs that individuals with disabilities depend on;

Whereas Federal policies, State policies, and the opinion of the Supreme Court in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999) assert the right of an individual to live in his or her home and community;

Whereas the majority of direct support professionals are employed in home and community-based settings, and the percentage of direct support professionals employed in such settings is projected to increase during this decade;

Whereas there is a documented critical and growing shortage of direct support professionals in every community throughout the United States; and

Whereas many direct support professionals are forced to leave jobs due to inadequate wages and benefits, creating high turnover and vacancy rates, which, research demonstrates, adversely affects the quality of supports provided to individuals with disabilities: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates the week beginning September 9,
3 2012, as “National Direct Support Professionals
4 Recognition Week”;

5 (2) recognizes the dedication and vital role of
6 direct support professionals, direct care workers,
7 personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home
8 support workers, and paraprofessionals (referred to
9 in this resolution as “direct support professionals”) in
10 enhancing the lives of individuals of all ages with
11 disabilities;

12 (3) appreciates the contribution of direct sup-
13 port professionals in serving needs that are beyond
14 the capacity of millions of families in the United
15 States;

16 (4) commends direct support professionals as
17 integral participants in the long-term support and
18 services system of the United States; and

1 (5) finds that the successful implementation of
2 the public policies of the United States depends on
3 the dedication of direct support professionals.

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