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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

July 21, 2008

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEES:  
COMMERCE, TRADE AND  
CONSUMER PROTECTION

ENVIRONMENT AND HAZARDOUS  
MATERIALS

TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
AND THE INTERNET

Dear Republican Colleague:

I have been working with the American Network of Community Options and Resources, a national organization whose membership includes over 800 grass roots community based providers of a broad range of service providers to individuals with disabilities. As some of you may know my father was a television anchor and reporter. As a reporter he was very involved in writing about the ills of large institutions for individuals with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. In my family becoming an advocate for these individuals and their families was "bred" into me. So when Mosaic, a faith based provider in Nebraska came to me to discuss the growing crisis in the recruitment and retention of direct support professionals, their low pay, the high turnover, and the growing shortage of available workforce, I naturally sat up and listened. Together, on a bi-partisan basis with Congresswoman Lois Capps, Mosaic advocates and the staff at ANCOR, we drafted and introduced a bill to address this crisis. Today there are over 125 co-sponsors to this legislation—the Direct Support Professionals Fairness and Security Act of 2007 (H.R. 1279).

Setting the stage for this legislation are two decades of laws passed by Congress and Federal and Supreme Court decisions stating that individuals have the right to receive supports in the least restrictive environment and the opportunity to be productive and contributing members of our society.

This legislation is supported by a broad-based coalition of national organizations beyond ANCOR, including The Arc, Lutheran Services of America and United Cerebral Palsy. I am nearly certain that all of you have organizations in your districts related to these fine organizations. I am sure you know of individuals of all ages who have developmental, physical, sensory or mental disabilities in your district who depend upon dedicated and caring support workers to live successfully in the community. The assistance needed is daily, often 24 hours a day, and involves many of life's most basic activities so that the child or adult can be a contributing member of their community.

Please consider supporting H.R. 1279, the Direct Support Professionals Fairness and Security Act of 2007. This bill creates an equitable system for increasing compensation for direct support professionals by allowing states to opt-in to a methodology outlined in the bill. If you have additional questions or would like to co-sponsor this bill, please contact Tessie Abraham at [tessie.abraham@mail.house.gov](mailto:tessie.abraham@mail.house.gov) or at 5-4155.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Terry".

Lee Terry  
Member of Congress