



For Immediate Release  
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## Michigan Governor Calls for Permanent Pay Increase for Direct Care Workers

*Whitmer’s State of the State Message Includes Proposal to Make \$2.00 Hourly Wage Increase Permanent, Showing Value of Direct Care Worker Services*

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer tonight unveiled a plan to make permanent a temporary \$2.00/hour wage increase for Direct Care Workers, currently set to expire on Feb. 28.

Residential and vocational Direct Care Workers provide much-needed personal care, training, emotional support and respite to vulnerable people and their families.

“The Governor understands well what we’ve been saying for many months now—when this increase ultimately expires, our state’s historically-underpaid Direct Care Workers are going to take a huge financial hit,” said Sherri Boyd, executive director of The Arc—Michigan. “The 100,000-plus families that rely on these workers for daily care will be left facing a critical gap in staffing and support if this temporary increase goes away four weeks from now, as it’s currently set to do.”

A strong coalition of organizations has come together to support the need for permanent changes to the way Michigan’s Direct Care Workers are supported.

“This is one of the most critical issues facing our state right now,” said Todd Culver, CEO of Incompass-Michigan. “The fact that all leaders in Lansing can agree this is a top priority is a very positive indicator that we’ll be able to help keep Direct Care Workers on the job, supporting Michigan’s most vulnerable residents.”

Nearly a million Michigan residents rely directly or indirectly on the value Direct Care Workers provide.

“I couldn’t be more pleased,” said Robert White, a parent advocate from southeast Michigan. “We have worked a very long time for the day when our residents with mental illness and developmental disabilities would be recognized at this level and are very excited about working with all our state’s leaders in the weeks and months ahead.”

Coalition members hope the Governor’s recommendation will be acted on in the coming weeks.

“As a coalition comprised of many deeply concerned members, we have been working toward action on this issue for a long while,” said Robert Stein, general counsel for the Michigan Assisted Living Association. “This is a solution that requires urgent action before Feb. 28, so our state’s most vulnerable residents—and the workers who give so much to protect them—can continue working together for good.”

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