



Talking Points for Wages over Bonuses

- New York is the epicenter of a national home care crisis, with a forecast shortage of more than 83,000 workers by 2025. It has been widely established that low wages are the cause, with most home care workers earning at or just above the minimum wage.
- Instead of increasing home care wages through Fair Pay for Home Care, the proposed SFY 2023 offers bonuses of up between \$500 and \$3,000, although many will not receive any bonus.
- These bonuses are too little, too late and will not lessen the workforce crisis or lift workers out of poverty and may result in loss of benefits.
- In July 2021, the fast food minimum wage increased to \$15/hour Upstate while on January 1, 2022 the minimum wage most home care workers receive Upstate became \$13.20.
- Even if a home care worker earns the entire \$3,000 bonus, if it is added to their total wages and calculated hourly, it would still only be \$14.62/hr.
- Most workers will not even get the full \$3,000 bonus, in fact only a small minority will. The amount of money a worker earns in their bonus depends on the number of hours they work.
- Home care workers who work less than 20 hours a week will not receive any bonus. Based on continually evolving data from CDPAANYS, this means that about 1 in 4 home care workers will see no bonus as a result of this initiative.
- Consumers schedule their workers, and apportioning hours that would determine bonus eligibility could lead to perceptions of favoritism or resentment and result in more workers quitting.
- A sudden, temporary change in income will have the unintended consequence of pushing home care workers over a “benefits cliff” in which they have lost eligibility for social services like housing subsidies and SNAP without earning enough to no longer need them.
- Bonuses are not useful for a low-wage worker. They will use them to pay back rent and then immediately be in the same financial position - choosing between rent and food.

ASK: Will you reject temporary and limited Health Care Workforce bonuses in favor of A.6329 (Gottfried)/S.5374 (May), the Fair Pay for Home Care bill that will increase worker wages and eliminate the home care crisis?