



COMMITTEE ON  
**EDUCATION  
& LABOR**  
REPUBLICANS

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**COMMITTEE  
STATEMENT**

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**Opening Statement of Rep. Greg Murphy (R-NC), Republican Leader of the  
Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment, Joint Hearing:  
"Care for Our Communities: Investing in the Direct Care Workforce"  
July 20, 2021**

(As prepared for delivery)

"Thank you, Chairwoman Wilson, for yielding. I'd like to thank the witnesses for joining us today.

Direct care workers are an essential part of the health care sector. I have personally worked with these individuals for over 30 years. These individuals act as primary providers of care, supervision, and emotional support for older Americans, people with disabilities, and individuals with chronic needs. As a physician, I understand the value they bring to our health care system, and the sacrifices they make to serve patients.

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate that there are over 3 million direct care workers employed today. These jobs provide an important source of income for a diverse array of individuals.

As the United States' population ages, and the need for direct care workers blossoms, the federal government must consider how its programs foster an environment where more people are encouraged to enter the health care workforce.

I believe the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the appropriate time for this Committee to reassess Congress's role in supporting a robust health care labor market.

In the existing WIOA structure, each state must create a one-stop delivery system that connects jobseekers with in-demand jobs. Direct care services should be a part of those state and local workforce development board conversations.

But Congress cannot predict the future. Our laws must be nimble and allow each community to address its unique needs. I believe that supporting direct care workers through a comprehensive WIOA reauthorization will give individuals interested in careers in the direct care field access to programs that will help them gain the skills necessary to succeed.

Legislation like H.R. 2999, the Direct CARE Opportunity Act, is duplicative to workforce programs that we already have in place. I am concerned that a new federal program devoted exclusively to direct care workers may threaten the performance of the broader workforce development system.

Republicans on this Committee want to help all workers, including those in the direct care sector, by strengthening WIOA and other workforce development programs. I look forward to hearing from the witnesses today how we can build up the health care workforce without detracting from other critical professions.

Thank you and I yield back.”

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