

AARP Thanks Iowa Senate for Passing SF 2298

Written by Ann Black
Monday, 19 March 2012 12:32

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AARP Thanks Iowa Senate for Passing Legislation to Professionalize Iowa's Largest Workforce: Direct Care Workers

Des Moines, March 12, 2012—AARP thanks the Iowa Senate for passing Senate File 2298 this afternoon, the first step to professionalizing Iowa's largest workforce - Direct Care Workers.

"AARP thanks members of the Iowa Senate for passing Senate File 2298 today, leading the way to improve and support Iowa's largest skilled workforce so that Iowa is prepared to care to meet our state's future needs," said Kent Sovern, AARP Iowa State Director.

A task force made up of members of Iowa's direct care workers as well as industry providers has spent more than two years developing the recommendations proposed by Senate File 2298. The legislation establishes core state standards for training, creates career pathways for advancement and specialization, and creates a Board to oversee these professional standards. Currently, Iowa has professional oversight boards and requires qualitative credentialing for all plumbers, hair stylists, massage therapists and a host of other occupations,

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but does not require a similar credentialing for all direct care workers.

“AARP commends the Iowa Senate for supporting the recommendations of the Direct Care Worker Task Force and professionalizing Direct Care Workers,” said Sovern. “This is the first step toward giving Iowa’s direct care workers the recognition and professional status they want and deserve, and creating the environment necessary for workers to meet the growing health care needs of our state.”

With an estimated 73,000 direct care workers in Iowa, these paid caregivers make up the largest segment of Iowa’s workforce. Moreover, demand for direct care services is high and growing. Iowa will need an additional 12,000 direct care workers by 2012. High turnover is a persistent challenge. This legislation elevates the profession by offering all Iowa’s direct care workers portable training and credentials.

AARP hopes SF 2298 will find strong support among Iowa’s Representatives to better serve Iowa’s long-term care needs as it moves to the Iowa House.

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