



Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today and raise some of the concerns of domestic workers who care for what we value the most – our homes and loved ones – and make all other work possible.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) is a voice for dignity and fairness for the millions of domestic workers in the US and beyond. Founded in 2007, NDWA is powered by 60 affiliate organizations around the country of over 20,000 nannies, housecleaners and direct care workers for the elderly and people with disabilities.

NDWA uses many strategies to advance our mission include supporting the leadership development of individual domestic worker leaders, building the capacity of community based organizations to represent the voices of low-wage immigrant women and leading several state and federal campaigns including:

- Our anti-trafficking campaign, Beyond Survival that organizes domestic workers who have survived trafficking.
- We Belong Together our campaign to mobilize support for policies that meet the needs of immigrant women.
- Transnational organizing through the International Domestic Workers Federation.
- Social Innovations, which explores private sector partnerships.
- And We Dream in Black, which organizing black domestic workers.

Domestic workers are an estimated workforce of about 2 million. Almost 95% are women, largely women of color, and over half are immigrants. This is reflected in our membership.

My comments today will mainly relate to necessary legislative and policy actions with this labor sector in mind. The solutions this sector of low-wage immigrant working women need include comprehensive federal legislation. This has been a successful strategy for us at the state level, which I'll discuss more later. This legislation should extend federal workplace protections to domestic workers, expand access to safety net benefits to domestic workers and regularize the immigration status for the workforce.

Other solutions include immigration policies that allow families to stay together, ensure workplace safety, do not tie employees to abusive employers and protect survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking.

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We also have many protections that already exist and need more robust enforcement and implementation and increased coordination between federal agencies as well as between different levels of government.

We also need to create access to quality affordable childcare for all families and stable direct care in homes for seniors and people with disabilities.

In terms of the measures governments are taking, recently the US Department of Labor made regulatory changes to expand access to minimum wage and overtime protections for most direct care workers. This was the result of worker organizing and engagement with policy makers.

We have pursued state strategies to improve worker protections under state laws when federal laws do not offer such protections. We have supported seven successful state Bill of Rights campaigns that have given workers greater protections and provided meaningful opportunities for domestic workers to lead legislative campaign, share their stories and truths and build political skills. The states where we have won are Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon and California.

Measures that workers organizations can take include amplifying stories and creating conditions for workers themselves to be at the forefront of politics and change. Organizations can build capacity of workers and lift up their stories. The current political climate has invigorated our members to continue to organize and demand accountability and policies that recognize the dignity of this workforce.

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