



Fact Sheet

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE DEMOCRATS

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The Hon. Bobby Scott • Ranking Member

The Direct CARE Opportunity Act of 2017

Direct care workers provide daily living assistance to millions of older Americans, people with disabilities and others with chronic care needs. While there is not one consistent, standard definition used for the direct care workforce, estimates show that positions related to direct care constitute [one-third of the health care workforce](#) – outnumbering physicians, nurses, and medical assistants. These workers are the backbone of the long-term care workforce and assist individuals with daily tasks, by preparing meals, managing medications, providing transportation, and much more.

There is growing demand for direct care workers and not enough workers to meet the demand. The direct care workforce includes some of the fastest growing occupations. By 2024, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that [more than a million direct care workers](#) will be needed. To meet this demand and create jobs across the country, Congress should invest in this field and these workers who care for millions of community members every day.

What does the *Direct CARE Opportunity Act* do?

The Direct Creation, Advancement, and Retention of Employment (CARE) Opportunity Act addresses the need for a prepared, well-trained and empowered direct care workforce now and for the future.

- Provides funding to fifteen entities to invest in strategies that will create jobs and enhance the direct care workforce pipeline.
- Implements models and strategies to make the field of direct care more attractive, such as training, career pathways, or mentoring, allowing for local and regional innovation to address workforce shortages and needs in a high-demand field.
- Encourages retention and career advancement in the growing field of direct care.
- Responds to the needs of a growing aging population and allows older Americans, people with disabilities, and others who require direct care services to remain in their communities, when possible.