

# CIVICS LEAGUE for DISABILITY RIGHTS

People with disabilities taking action together.



August 21, 2025

Testimony of Manyon Lyons

Public Hearing on the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP)

August 21, 2025 – Senate Hearing Room, 19th Floor, 250 Broadway, New York, NY

Good morning, chairs, members of the Committees, and all in attendance.

My name is Manyon Lyons. I am an African American woman in my early 60s living with cerebral palsy, which affects my entire body. I have been using the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program for over 20 years, and it has been the foundation of my independence and dignity.

I chose CDPAP because it gave me control over my own home — the ability to decide who came into my space, when they came, how they worked, and what tasks were done. That level of choice is not a luxury — it is a lifeline. Under my previous fiscal intermediary, Concepts of Independence, and my Managed Long-Term Care provider, Independence Care System (ICS), my services were coordinated smoothly, my workers were paid on time, and I could focus on living my life instead of managing constant crises.

In April 2025, Public Partnerships LLC (PPL) took over as the sole fiscal intermediary for CDPAP. Since that change, my life has been turned upside down. I am speaking today not only for myself but for so many in the disability community who are now fighting to hold onto the independence this program once promised.

Last year, I suffered a serious accident and fractured my leg. My needs increased drastically. Without CDPAP and my trusted personal assistants, I would not have been able to stay in my

home. Traditional home care would not have accommodated the flexibility and trust my situation required. CDPAP kept me safe, comfortable, and connected to my community.

But now, with PPL in charge, the very system that is supposed to support me has become a daily source of stress and instability. Their Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system frequently fails or inaccurately records my workers' clock-in and clock-out times. The payroll process is deeply flawed — especially for those of us with 24-hour coverage split into two 12-hour shifts. The system treats one shift as two separate parts — from 8 PM to 11:59 PM and then again from 12 AM to 8 AM — creating confusion and delays in payment.

I should not have to become a human resources specialist to manage my own care. Yet with PPL, I am forced to navigate payroll approval systems I was never trained to use. If I cannot log into my account to approve hours — because of technical errors on their end — my workers go unpaid. Sometimes, it takes over a week for them to get their money.

Let me be clear: this is not just an inconvenience. My workers are human beings with bills, families, and lives of their own. Delayed paychecks force them to choose between staying in a job they love and paying their rent or feeding their children. If I lose a trusted worker because they cannot rely on being paid, my health, safety, and independence are immediately at risk.

The problems do not end there. Earlier last month, I was blindsided when PPL informed me of an “authorization” issue for my workers. In 20 years of CDPAP under my previous fiscal intermediary, I had never even heard of such a problem — let alone had my care disrupted because of it.

These failures are not small glitches. They are systemic breakdowns that threaten my ability to live independently in my own home. Every time a paycheck is delayed, every time a technical error occurs, every time authorization is questioned — my care is disrupted, my autonomy is undermined, and my dignity is put on the line.

Governor Hochul and the Department of Health made the decision to place the entire CDPAP system under one fiscal intermediary. That decision is not working. It is failing consumers, failing workers, and eroding the very principles CDPAP was built on.

I urge you to take immediate action to restore choice, accountability, and proper coordination in CDPAP. The stakes could not be higher. For me — and for so many others — this is not about

convenience. This is about the right to remain in our homes, connected to our communities, and in control of our own lives.

Thank you for listening, and for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of myself and the disability community that depends on this program.

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