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Home Care Workers Rule a Victory for Millions, a Step Forward for Administration

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards welcomed today’s Department of Labor rule that will finally require employers to pay minimum wage and overtime to home care workers who provide critical care to older adults and people with disabilities. The rule had been under review at the White House since Jan. 15, 2013, even though an executive order limits White House review to 90 days with a single 30-day extension. Groups are applauding the rule as a step forward for the Administration on issuing public protections.

“Home care workers provide crucial in-home care and support for our elderly or disabled family members, friends and neighbors; yet these workers have struggled to support their own families,” said Christine Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project. “These reforms are a critical step towards improving wages in one of our country’s fastest-growing occupations. We applaud the Obama administration for keeping its promise to these workers.”

“Home care workers have been treated unfairly because of a technicality, and now finally the Labor Department is taking action to fix the problem,” said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen and CSS co-chair. “The administration has a series of delayed rules in its hands and it needs to be much more aggressive in finalizing these vital protections.”

“This is historic. For the first time, a group of workers (mostly female) who provide essential services for our elders, children, and the disabled will be treated like other workers in the formal economy,” said Katherine McFate, president and CEO of the Center for Effective Government and CSS co-chair. “Today’s rule changes get us one step closer to fulfilling the promise of the Fair Labor Standards Act, passed 75 years ago to protect all workers. This is an important advance for economic and social justice in America.”

“Federal protection for the minimum wage and overtime rights of home care workers is long overdue,” said Ross Eisenbrey, vice president of the Economic Policy Institute (EPI). “EPI applauds the Obama administration for issuing this final rule, and we look forward to legislation that will set a higher, fairer minimum wage.”

The home care workers rule was examined in further detail in a recent CSS report, [*Down the Regulatory Rabbit Hole: How Corporate Influence, Judicial Review and a Lack of Transparency Delay Crucial Rules and Harm the Public.*](#)

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The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards is an alliance of consumer, labor, scientific, research, good government, faith, community, health, environmental, and public interest groups, as well as concerned individuals, joined in the belief that our country's system of regulatory safeguards provides a stable framework that secures our quality of life and paves the way for a sound economy that benefits us all. For more information about the coalition, see [http://www.sensible safeguards.org/about us.](http://www.sensible safeguards.org/about_us)