The long term care sector is facing a 13-year labor low and needs nearly 250,000 workers to return to pre-pandemic levels. Almost every nursing home and assisted living community in the United States is facing a workforce crisis. It’s time that policymakers prioritize our caregivers with the resources and support they deserve.

At a Glance
- In 2021, there were 4.7 million direct care workers.
- Long term care employers will need to fill 7.9 million job openings in direct care from 2020 to 2030, including 1.2 million new jobs to meet rising demand, and another 6.7 million job openings to replace workers who leave the labor force or transfer to new occupations.

Race/Ethnicity
- 61% of direct care workers are people of color
- 30% are Black/African American
- 19% are Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- 7% are Asian or Pacific-Islander
- 5% identify as other races or ethnicities
- 30% of nursing assistants in nursing homes are people of color
- 90% of nursing assistants in nursing homes are women

Gender
- 86% of all direct care workers are women
- 58% of nursing assistants in nursing homes are people of color
- 90% of nursing assistants in nursing homes are women

Age
- The median age of direct careworkers is 43, but the age distribution of the workforce varies considerably.
- The median age is 37 for workers in nursing and residential care homes.
- 1 in 5 nursing assistants are 16-24 years old.

Parental Status
- 34% of direct care workers in nursing homes have children under the age of 18
- 13% have children under the age of 5
- 27% have children aged 5-17