

# CAPE COD TIMES

DISTINGUISHED NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Student loans should not cost taxpayers

So, during Sen. Elizabeth Warren's visit to Chatham on Saturday, "Becca, a Northeastern University graduate, asked Warren what her backup plan is if President Biden does not forgive more student loan debt."

Dear Becca and Sen. Warren, the backup plan is: Pay your debt. You and any other consumer acquiring a loan signed a legal document expressing your intent to repay borrowed money. Period.

There was no clause that taxpayers would "rescue" you from any folly that you might find yourself in in the future.

As an aside to Warren, Americans do not want to eliminate student debt, they want people to pay their legal obligations.

Also, they want an education system that doesn't keep raising its tuition to meet any new government subsidy, as they will again if this attack on the middle- and lower-income classes gets passed.

If anyone wants to assume student debt, it should be colleges and universities sitting on billions of dollars in endowments. And stop paying professors \$350,000 a year to teach one class.

*Jonathan Borden, East Falmouth*

### Boost wages for human services workers

As the director of Community Services for Transitions Centers, a nonprofit offering critical day services to people across the Cape, I have witnessed the human services workforce crisis firsthand.

Salaries earned by human services professionals, which are determined by state reimbursement rates, don't reflect the vital nature of our work helping neuro-diverse adults (including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism, generalized anxiety disorder, deafness, psychiatric disabilities, Prader Willi Syndrome and blindness) develop skills to help them become more confident, competent and independent in the community.

Providers across Massachusetts face high job va-

cancy rates, and direct service staff is leaving for higher-paying, less stressful jobs, often in fast food establishments or delivery companies.

We currently are unable to serve all of the individuals who need our services because we lack the staff to support them.

To keep agencies staffed and providing the care our most vulnerable neighbors need, the state must boost wages to just over \$20 an hour — a fair, living wage. It will take \$581 million in new state investment to do so. We need state senators Julian Cyr and Susan Moran, and Senate leadership, to support human services workers and the people we serve by paying these professionals a living wage.

*Scott Chausse, South Yarmouth*

### A living wage for personal care attendants

Having a child with a disability is at times rewarding and other times a struggle. We rely on personal care attendants (PCAs) to help support our child with daily tasks. These are not babysitters. The PCA helps children like Bridget to achieve independence in dressing, feeding and accessing community programs. A PCA becomes an integral part of the family and comes to love and care for our child.

The wages for these workers are based on reimbursement by the state. The low wage makes choosing a career in the disability field undesirable. A PCA cannot support themselves on less than \$17 an hour and are leaving the workforce for better equity. The PCA is a viable person in our workforce and should be paid accordingly.

The state must act. There are proposals to boost entry-level wages to just over \$20 an hour, which can give our PCAs a living wage and allow agencies to not only retain staff but recruit.

We need Sen. Susan Moran, D-Falmouth, to make the investment to fully fund the human service workforce to make sure families like our own have access to life-sustaining programs.

*Kerri Ames, East Sandwich*