

**United States Senate  
Democratic Policy Committee Hearing**

**“Is the Bush Economic ‘Stimulus’ Plan Effective, Fair,  
and Fiscally Responsible?”**

**Statement of Frank Greene**

January 21, 2003

My name is Frank Greene. I am 33 years old, and live in Seaside Heights, New Jersey. I’ve been a New Jersey resident my whole life – born and raised in New Jersey. I’m a member of the Service Employees International Union, Local 1199. I’ve worked for the past 10 years as a Certified Nurse’s Assistant at Leisure Chateau nursing home where I’m paid \$9.05 an hour. I also work a second job at an agency that places me in different nursing homes temporarily. I make \$13 and \$14 an hour for the agency, but receive no benefits. I’m a single man, and I have a 12 year old child who lives with his mother in Oklahoma.

I’m hoping to buy a home if I could get a mortgage, but with my income level it’s hard. I’ve had difficulty making ends meet. When your take home pay can be as little as \$1,100 a month and your bills are as much as \$1,600 a month, no matter how you do the math, you come up short. There’s no upward mobility in this job. In any other job – even McDonald’s or Burger King – after 10 years you wouldn’t be making only \$9.00 an hour.

The tax cut President Bush is proposing would put only \$50 in my pocket – for the entire year. Less than one dollar a week. I think the federal government should send more money out to help working class individuals – who need the money and would use it to pay for everyday expenses.

Because of my work, I also think more money should be spent on Medicare and Medicaid. The money to make a nursing home run comes almost entirely from the government. We’re extremely short-staffed at my job, and every year there are high turnover rates. When we’re short-staffed, the residents don’t get the care they need. If there aren’t enough hands, they may have to wait up to 40 minutes. You can’t stop caring for one person to go care for another person.

And most nurse’s aides feel upset because the state has recognized how important our work is. It’s one of the few jobs where you’re required to be fingerprinted with an FBI background check every two years. That’s how important our work is.

If there were more Medicaid and Medicare dollars, it would help bring more people into this field, and people wouldn’t leave because they can’t afford to take care of themselves and their families. We don’t work at these jobs for the money, we do it because we care about the residents. But we can’t continue if we can’t afford to live on the salaries we make.

I appreciate the chance to speak to you today. Thank you very much.