

My name is Fatme Chehab, I am 73 years old, and I am the sole caregiver for my 71-year-old husband, who is living with Parkinson's disease.

As his spouse and full-time caregiver, I provide daily assistance with mobility, personal care, medication management, and monitoring his safety. Parkinson's disease presents ongoing and progressive challenges that require constant attention, and caregiving is both physically and emotionally demanding.

I am deeply concerned about any proposal to reduce the number of respite care hours available to families like mine. While I am grateful for the 140 hours of respite care currently provided, those hours already do not get me through the full fiscal year. Each year, I am forced to stretch the hours carefully, and I still find myself without support for long periods.

Because I am my husband's sole caregiver, a reduction in respite hours would create a significant financial hardship. Without adequate respite, I would have no alternative support and no relief from caregiving responsibilities. Respite care allows me critical time to attend to my own health needs, manage household responsibilities, and recover physically so that I can continue caring for my husband at home.

Reducing the number of hours would place an additional and unsustainable burden on me. I respectfully ask that you do not reduce the current respite care hours, and that you recognize how essential this support is for aging spouses who are doing everything possible to care for their loved ones.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Respectfully,
Fatme Chehab