

Good morning, distinguished Members of the Committee.

My name is Justin Rust, and I'm a custodian with Seaford School District currently, and I've been a public school custodian for the last seven years.

I stand before you today to highlight the essential role custodians play in our public education system and why the work we custodians do must be acknowledged and fairly compensated.

Custodians are more than just workers. We're the unsung and silent heroes who maintain the environments where children grow, learn, and thrive.

Our work is vital in preserving and improving our school facilities, ensuring that these spaces remain clean, safe, and conducive to learning. In fact, custodians are often the first to arrive and the last to leave, making sure that schools are secure, functional, and ready for the next day of education. It is time that our hard work and dedication are recognized through dignified, competitive wages.

Providing custodians with a living wage isn't just an investment in their well-being, it's an investment in the success of our schools and communities. Providing custodians competitive compensation reduces turnover, ensuring schools remain staffed with experience professionals who understand the nuances of maintaining safe and welcoming environments. Moreover, fair wages help us support our families, which strengthens the local economy.

After all, our public schools are a shared community resource, and custodians are the stewards who manage and care for those resources. The custodial contributions in our public education system improve morale, create a positive environment, and ultimately benefit the long-term success of our students in public education system.

Thank you for considering this vital issue. It's time to support those who work tirelessly to support our schools.