

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

October 7-13, 2007 is National Long-Term Care Residents' Rights Week, a time to acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices many long-term care residents have made to better our community. This year's theme – *Advancing Excellence: A Resident's Perspective on Quality* – is encouraging these residents to speak up about what quality of care and life in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or board and care facilities means to them. It also encourages facilities to value their residents' opinions and include their perspectives in their efforts to provide excellence in caregiving.

Celebrate and acknowledge residents' rights through participating in Residents' Rights Week events and calling on your elected officials and local facilities to show their support by attending or organizing activities.

<INSERT DETAILS OF YOUR LOCAL RESIDENTS' RIGHTS WEEK EVENT - BE SURE TO NOTE ANY PROCLAMATIONS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS.>

During Residents' Rights Week we recognize our local long-term care ombudsman program staff and volunteers who work daily to promote residents' rights, assist residents with complaints, and provide information to those who need to find a long-term care facility. In this area, the ombudsman program serves <INSERT DETAILS ABOUT THE SIZE OF THE REGION, THE NUMBER OF FACILITIES, AND HOW TO CONTACT THE OMBUDSMAN>

Our community is also served by a citizen advocacy group <INSERT NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION> that advocates for improved quality of care and quality of life for those who live in long-term care facilities.

As <INSERT NAME OF LOCALITY> celebrates Residents' Rights, I encourage community members to visit someone they know in a long-term care facility, volunteer in a facility, participate in Residents' Rights Week events, or inquire about becoming a volunteer long-term care ombudsman. Your assistance and attention helps to ensure that the voices of long-term care residents do not go unheard and demonstrates to residents that they have not been forgotten.

**** NOTE:** All letters to the editor must include a signature, address, and phone number so that the paper may contact you with any questions. You may also include your affiliation with an organization if you wish. Your phone number and address will not be printed.

If possible, try to link your opening paragraph with something that was recently in the newspaper. For example, "As thousands of World War II veterans gathered this Memorial Day, it is important to remember those veterans and others who currently live in our nations' 62,000 long-term care facilities."