

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

October is National Long-Term Care Residents' Rights Month, a time to acknowledge the contributions and sacrifices many long-term care (LTC) residents have made to better our community and to call attention to the rights of residents in long-term care facilities. This year's theme – *Better Staffing: The Key to Better Care*, was selected to call attention to the fact that residents of LTC facilities still have the right to vote and participate politically. Residents of LTC facilities have experienced many important historical, political events. It is important that they are given the opportunity to continue to participate in the political process and that voting is made accessible to them.

By listening to residents' voices, we honor their lives and experiences as well as treat them with dignity and respect; staff and residents can enjoy relationships that enhance their day-to-day lives; and the long-term care facility can operate more effectively in its daily activities when based on and developed with consumer involvement. Many people care about residents - family members, citizen advocates, long-term care ombudsmen, facility staff and others. This care can be truly individualized and focused on each person's needs and preferences.

Celebrate and acknowledge these rights by participating in Residents' Rights Month 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 MONTH EVENT - BE SURE TO NOTE ANY PROCLAMATIONS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS.>

During Residents' Rights Month, 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 those they know in a long-term care facility, volunteer in a facility, participate in Residents' Rights Month 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 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.