October 13, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

The undersigned organizations urge you to ensure that important protections for nursing home residents are included in the Budget Reconciliation bill being considered by the House of Representatives. Considering the great tragedy that befell nursing home residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever we must address the long-standing issues in facilities that have been barriers to the provision of quality care.

The Budget Reconciliation bill, as passed out of the Budget Committee, currently includes provisions that, if passed, would make a significant difference in the lives of nursing home residents. These provisions\(^1\) (Title XIII, Subtitle E, Part 3, Secs. 134301-134304) address funding that improves the accuracy and reliability of certain skilled nursing facility data; ensures accurate information on Medicare cost reports; provides necessary funds to improve the survey and oversight process; and addresses insufficient staffing by providing a necessary path towards achieving minimum staffing standards. Research shows that the presence of sufficient staff lowers infections, leads to better outcomes and fewer deaths for residents.

More than 186,000\(^2\) residents and staff in long-term care facilities died of COVID-19. We must take action now to protect and support those living and working in long-term care facilities and prevent such a tragedy from recurring in the future. These provisions in the Budget Reconciliation bill are a critical step in the right direction.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

AARP
American Association for Justice
American Association on Health and Disability
Caregiver Action Network
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Essential Caregivers Coalition
Human Rights Watch
Long Term Care Community Coalition
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

\(^1\) These provisions are included in the Nursing Home Improvement and Accountability Act (H.R. 5169; S.2694)

\(^2\) https://www.aarp.org/ppi/issues/caregiving/info-2020/nursing-home-covid-dashboard.html
National Association of Local Long Term Care Ombudsman (NALLTCO)
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of State Long Term Care Ombudsman Programs
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
Public Citizen

State Organizations

Angel Long Term Care Advocacy, Indiana
Arise, New York
Arkansas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents
California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform (CANHR)
Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE), Pennsylvania
Center for Elder Law & Justice, New York
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
Community Legal Services of Philadelphia
Dignity Alliance, Massachusetts
Disability Policy Consortium, Massachusetts
Elder Justice Committee of Metro Justice, New York
Elder Law Solutions
Family Advocate Care Experience (FACE) NJ
Family Council, Waterview Pines Nursing Home, Minnesota
Friends of Residents in Long Term Care, North Carolina
Gray Panthers, New York
Greater Boston Chapter of United Spinal Association
Idaho Caregiver Alliance
Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities
Idaho State Independent Living Council
Intermountain Fair Housing Council, Inc., Idaho
Justice and Change for Victims of Nursing Facilities, Virginia
Kalamazoo County Advocates for Senior Issues
Kansas Advocates for Better Care
Keswick Family Council, Maryland
Lakeshore Foundation, Alabama
Law Firm of D.F. Truhowsky, New York
Levin & Perconti, Illinois
Living Independence Network Corporation, Idaho
Long Term Care Ombudsman, SOWEGA COA, Georgia
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, 03A, Washington
Lower Savannah Regional LTC Ombudsman Program
Massachusetts Advocates for Nursing Home Reform
Massachusetts Long Term Care Ombudsman Program
Michigan Elder Justice Initiative
Michigan Long Term Care Ombudsman Program
Montgomery County MD LTC Ombudsman
NC Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
The New York State Veterans Home at Montrose Family Council
New York StateWide Senior Action Council
NJ Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office
Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass, Kentucky
Nursing Home Victim Coalition, Inc, Texas
Office of the RI State Long Term Care Ombudsman
Ohio Office of the State LTC Ombudsman
Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature
Our Mother’s Voice, South Carolina
Rivera & Shackelford, P.C., California
Sisters of St. Joseph, New York
South Carolina-Caregivers for Compromise
State Long-term Care Ombudsman Program of West Virginia
Texas Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Vermont LTC Ombudsman Project
Voice for Seniors, New York