

Advocates Applaud New Protections for Residents of Long-Term Care in House-passed Build Back Better plan

Urge Senate not to Bend to Industry Pressure to Drop Essential Protections

For Immediate Release: November 19, 2021 Contact: Kristin Hyde, 206-491-0773

Washington, DC -- The House-passed Build Back Better Act includes the most significant increase in protections for nursing home residents in decades.

Today, advocates for residents of long-term care homes applauded this critical step, and called on the Senate to include these essential provisions in its version of the Build Back Better Act.

The provisions included in the House version would:

- Require nursing homes to have a registered nurse on staff 24 hours per day;
- Result in a study of staffing in nursing homes and the implementation of a federal minimum staffing standard;
- Increase oversight and enforcement in nursing homes;
- Require increased scrutiny of data submitted to the federal government by nursing homes; and
- Result in more accountability for how nursing homes spend billions of taxpayer dollars they receive each year.

Statement by Lori Smetanka, Executive Director of the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care 11/19/21

“We appreciate the work of Ways & Means Committee Chair Richard Neal and other members who supported these historic provisions in the House bill.

The past year and a half has been devastating to residents of long-term care facilities and their loved ones. More than 186,000 residents and staff have died from COVID-19; countless more suffered from isolation and neglect. These provisions are an important step in ensuring the tragic events of the COVID-19 pandemic do not recur.

The fight to better protect residents and ensure quality of care is not over. The for-profit nursing home industry is intensely fighting provisions to require at least one registered nurse (RN) 24 hours a day, and to increase minimum staffing standards. Privately-owned for-profit providers are asking lawmakers to cut these provisions from the Build Back Better plan.

Long-term care providers get billions of dollars in public funds to provide care and services through Medicare, Medicaid, and supplemental government payouts. Yet, there is a lack of transparency and accountability for how they spend that money, or whether adequate amounts go toward the provision of care - really the only thing that matters to residents and their families.

It's now up to the Senate to keep these provisions that enhance the transparency needed to account for

the use of public funds, and include more than \$4 billion in additional funding to support staffing, assist with recruitment, training, and retention.

We call on the industry to stop fighting measures to ensure adequate staffing, and instead to support staff with living wages, benefits, adequate training, and better working conditions in order to attract people to this field.”

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The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care is the leading national voice representing consumers in issues related to long-term care, helping to ensure that consumers are empowered to advocate for themselves. We are a primary source of information and tools for consumers, families, caregivers, advocates and ombudsmen to help ensure quality care for the individual.

