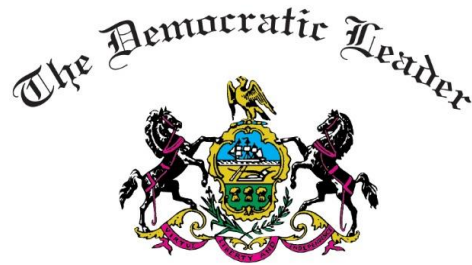


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Senate of Pennsylvania

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March 18, 2021

The Honorable Governor Tom Wolf
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Secretary Alison Beam
Pennsylvania Department of Health
8th Floor West
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Acting Secretary Beam and the Honorable Governor Wolf:

Pennsylvania nursing homes are in crisis. After hearing from frontline caregivers, I urge you to update the state nursing home regulations based on what researchers, advocates and caregivers know is needed to reform this broken system. Most significantly, this means increasing staffing regulations to 4.1 hours of nursing care per day for every nursing home resident.

This crisis did not begin with COVID-19. The virus only laid bare the long-standing flaws, failures and weaknesses of our nursing home system--flaws that healthcare workers and patient advocates have been describing for decades now. Chronic and dangerous understaffing, poor recruitment and retention of caregivers and unacceptable conditions for workers and nursing home residents created a system that could not withstand a global pandemic.

Here in Pennsylvania, over 10,000 nursing home residents have died of COVID-19; that's 52% of total deaths. According to AARP data, Pennsylvania had the fourth-worst rate of nursing home deaths in the country.


For years, caregivers and advocates have been demanding better staffing and tougher regulation, but it has been decades since our long-term care regulations have been updated to meet the needs of our aging population. Now we know the consequences, and we need to listen to the caregivers who risk their lives every day to do this work.

Nursing home residents need better care and caregivers must have the ability to provide it. Right now, nursing homes are only required to provide 2.7 hours of care each day to each person. We

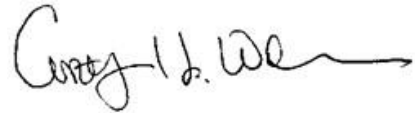
must increase the minimum staffing requirement to at least 4.1 hours of care per day. The AARP, the federal government, and dozens of scholars and advocates agree this minimum is necessary to provide patients with a safe environment and quality care.

This crisis has gone on far too long. On behalf of the thousands of caregivers and nursing home residents in our state, I urge you to implement these recommendations and protect the people of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,



Senator Jay Costa, Jr.
Democratic Leader
43rd Senate District



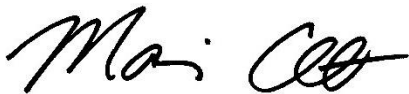
Senator Anthony H. Williams
Democratic Whip
8th Senate District



Senator Vincent Hughes
Appropriations Chair
7th Senate District



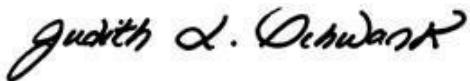
Senator Wayne Fontana
Caucus Chairman
42nd Senate District



Senator Maria Collett
Caucus Secretary
12th Senate District



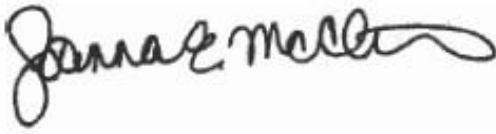
Senator Katie Muth
Policy Committee Chair
44th Senate District



Senator Judy Schwank
Caucus Administrator
11th Senate District



Senator Art Haywood
Health and Human Services Chair
4th Senate District



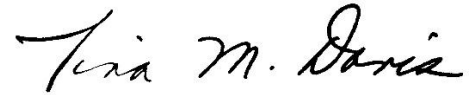
Representative Joanna McClinton
Democratic Leader
191st House District



Representative Jordan Harris
Democratic Whip
186th House District



Representative Dan Miller
Caucus Chairman
42nd House District



Representative Tina Davis
Caucus Secretary
141st House District



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Caucus Administrator
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Policy Committee Chair
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Appropriations Chair
70th House District



Representative Dan Frankel
Health Committee Chair
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