



Juanita Brent
State Representative
12th House District

Sponsor Testimony - House Bill 461

Chair Ginter, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Howse, and the members of the House Aging and Long-Term Care Affairs Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 461, legislation aimed at permitting long-term care residents to conduct electronic monitoring their room.

Did you know that approximately 16,000 cases of Elder Abuse, neglect, and exploitation are reported each year in Ohio? Staggering number, I know. Now, what if I told you that number does not accurately represent the number of elder abuse cases actually taking place? The National Institutes of Health, estimates that for every case reported, 14 are actually taking place. If these estimates are true, that means that 208,000 cases of elder abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation are actually taking place in Ohio every year.

Our seniors are a vulnerable population. As Ohio's population of age 60 years and older increases, more protection is needed. Our two most vulnerable populations are children and seniors. And when you drop off your child at the Daycare, what do they have monitoring the facility? Security cameras. So if we are already protecting our children with security cameras, why aren't we doing the same for our seniors?

Insert House Bill 461. HB 461, otherwise known as Esther's Law, would permit a resident of a long-term care facility to conduct electronic monitoring of the resident's room. This legislation was brought to me by a man from Cleveland whose mother was the victim of Elderly Abuse. The man put his mother in a Nursing Home as she began to suffer from Alzheimer's later in life. Soon thereafter, mysterious injuries began to appear but could not be explained. This prompted the man to set up a hidden camera in her room and what he found was shocking.

His mother, being mistreated and abused by nine different nursing aides. She could not speak up for herself, let alone defend herself. Imagine if that was your mother, your wife, your loved one being abused and taken advantage of by the ones who are supposed to be taking care of them. Now, that is an extreme case of elder abuse, however this bill will also be able to monitor accidents, slips, and falls that occur when a nurse is not on the scene. Seniors are one of our most vulnerable populations and we must work to make sure their dignity is maintained as they enter the twilight of their lives.



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That is where House Bill 461 comes into play. HB 461 would allow for a resident or resident's sponsor to install and use an electronic monitoring device in the resident's room. It would also require signage outside of the room to let people know that room is being monitored. The objective behind this is to discourage Elder Abuse in any form, to monitor any accidents that may occur, and to ease the minds of family and loved ones who are concerned.

If the resident lives with another resident, that other resident must also provide consent. There are conditions put into the legislation as well in order to appease both parties. (Ex. such as pointing the device away from other resident or the facility making a reasonable attempt to place resident who does not want the video camera in another available room.)

In closing, HB 461 is legislation aimed at making sure that we ALL are able to Live the American Dream. That Ohioans can live, work, and retire here. This is our Ohio Promise and how we work to keep that very promise.

I respectfully ask for this Committee's support on House Bill 461 and I can take any questions you may have. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Juanita Brent

State Representative of Ohio House District 12

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Juanita Brent", is written below the typed name.