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ELDERLY ADVOCATES

[www.elderlyadvocates.org](http://www.elderlyadvocates.org)

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**Written Testimony on House Bill 461  
Aging and Long-Term Care Committee, June 3, 2020  
Paula Mueller, President Elderly Advocates**

Chair Ginter, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Howse, and the members of the House Aging and Long-Term Care Committee,

Thank you for allowing Elderly Advocates to submit written testimony as an interested party of House Bill 461, legislation which will allow electronic monitoring in resident rooms in long-term care facilities.

As many of us have seen the stories in the newspapers, social media and from families, acceptable care in nursing homes and assisted living facilities has been an issue for decades. We see the stories but lack making the changes needed to happen. Elderly Advocates is a newer non-profit, non-partisan organization and one of the first in Ohio that is community based and has a mission to improve the quality of life for the elderly and all residing in long-term care through education, support and advocacy.

I started this organization after six years of taking care of my uncle from California suddenly whom I was very close to from kid up. He and I went through at least eight nursing homes hoping the next one would be better or the answer. I was hopeful we had found the right place at the last nursing home. The last nursing home would be where he would fall five times in a week because no one came to help him pull up his pants in the bathroom. His last fall sent him to the hospital where he could only get Hospital Acquired MRSA. These falls started a very bad chain of events and my uncle and I said goodbye in a most horrific way, with him yelling and screaming my name for hours and hours. These are images I will never get out of my head.



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We originally wanted to see cameras in resident rooms as a pro-active measure. In that if a resident needs help and we see it on the camera, we can call the nurses station to get them help. Families do not want lawsuits or bad outcomes. They want their family members to be respected, live with dignity, and receive acceptable care.

Now, with the Covid-19 crisis, the families being shut out, staffing requirements being waived, no outside oversight, and an immunity law that gives no protection for neglect and no standards of care enforced, cameras are now urgently needed to deter neglect and abuse more than ever. Visiting could be reinstated, but also stopped again with an outbreak at any time. These cameras also have audio capability, which allows communication when in-person visits cannot happen. Families have been done their best to understand being shut out. However, they do want to continue to assist and advocate for their family members in long-term care. Cameras would accomplish that goal.

Although we are supportive of cameras, at this time, we are listed as an interested party. We feel there may be additional crafting that needs done on this bill for clarity on some of the terminology. We are hoping for a bill that will leave nothing up for debate and be easily engaged by the families.

Several states have already engaged cameras. Cameras are everywhere we turn. If a resident/authorized responsible party wishes to have one, they should not be denied that right.

We welcome an opportunity in being able to give further input and help this bill move along in any way we can. Please advise if we can be of further help.

Sincerely,

Paula Mueller  
President  
Elderly Advocates