

Written Testimony on HB 606
House Civil Justice Committee
May 26, 2020
Vicki Krafter, Guardian of sister in long-term care

Chairman Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown and Members of the Committee,

I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in opposition on HB 606. In giving testimony, I have seen poor care personally in nursing homes. My sister has been a resident in a nursing facility since September 17, 2016 and also a resident in two facilities prior to the current facility. I would like to testify as to what I have seen at the facility my sister resides at.

- She has had over 80 Falls since 2016, including 5 since the COVID-19 emergency due to not getting help when she needs it for toileting and ADLS.
- She is a choke risk due to a Vagal Nerve Stimulator she has and needs help with opening lids and eating, this has been a constant concern to me that there is enough staffing to help her before this crisis, and even more concern during the COVID-19 emergency.
- My sister has told me she was hit in the head by a nurse's fist and told she was going to die.
- I have seen in visiting my sister the call light under the sheet coiled up or stuck between the wall and bed so tight, I could not get it out. Her call light is not always made accessible to her.
- At times my sister has not received medicine due to staffing issues or an issue with an employee taking it from her for their own use.
- I have had _____ various complaints substantiated by the Ohio Department of Health.
- I have found PHI (protected health information) of my sister and eight other residents in my sisters room. I turned it into the Ohio Dept of Health and then it was realized they were coded wrong. It is scary to think what would have happened if it wasn't found and corrected even though PHI should not be laying around just anywhere.

As a Guardian of my sister how can I oversee her care now? There were many issues before this crisis in long-term care. I am asking you to take a pause on HB 606 and find the ways the residents can be protected when they depend on a higher level of care the most. My sister has cognitive disabilities and is like a 5-year-old. She needs protected, but I don't see that she will be if we give immunity to neglect in connection with COVID-19 in this proposed bill. It is very difficult for me to prove or make anyone accountable as many times it has be seen firsthand by those, we make complaints to. Ohio is a leader in fighting COVID-19. We also need to be a leader in how we protect our vulnerable elderly population in long-term care. I will answer any questions I can.