



State Senator
TINA MAHARATH

3rd District

Sponsor Testimony
Senator Tina Maharath
Senate Bill 56
Health, Human Service, and Medicaid Committee
Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Antonio, Vice Chair Huffman and members of the Health, Human Services, and Medicaid committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 56. Senate Bill 56 will create a Long-Term Care Inspection Committee whose purpose will be to conduct unannounced inspections and evaluations of all Long-Term Care Facilities in Ohio every 2 years, and to report back to the General Assembly with any findings or recommendations for improvement.

With over 4 million households in Ohio with individuals who are 60 years and older, we must make sure that our older adult population is cared for and protected. It is imperative that we do all that we can to have safe long-term care options for older adults and disabled Ohioans, so that they and their loved ones may make informed decisions.

Research indicates that more than 40% of people over the age of 65 will enter a nursing home before they die. As evidenced by The New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study, elder abuse is underreported. The study found that for every case of known abuse, 24 were unknown. According to the National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS) data, within the year 2014, only 7.6% of complaints reported to Ombudsman programs involved abuse, gross neglect, or exploitation. In addition, a 2008 study conducted by the U.S. General Accountability Office revealed that state surveys understate problems in licensed facilities, with 70% of state surveys missing at least one deficiency, and 15% of surveys missing actual harm and immediate jeopardy of a nursing home resident.

The Long-Term Care Inspection Committee would protect the health and safety of Ohio's seniors living in long-term care facilities and sends a clear message that the General Assembly cares about the well-being of older adults. Members of Health and Human Services committee, I ask for the favorable passage of SB 56 and I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.