

March 9, 2021

Chair Manchester,
Vice Chair Cutrona,
Ranking Member Liston,
Ohio House Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee

I am in favor of House Bill 120 which would allow a compassionate caregiver to visit their loved one in the nursing home without the strict restrictions we've experienced for a whole year.

My mother has been trapped in her room for 365 days beginning March 15th 2020 (her 92nd) birthday. I have visited her at her window at least a thousand times in the last year. She has experienced isolation to the nth degree. She has declined in that she cannot walk anymore and she is tired all the time and sleeps most of the day in her chair.

She misses me terribly because I used to go in every day and take her out for rides and to my home.

All year I've been telling her it's almost over and telling her we're working on this bill and we are hoping the governor will listen to us... But now after a whole year she is still stuck in her room in her chair.

She is not allowed to go to the dining room or to activities or see anybody but the nurses and aides.

If I hadn't had that window and visited her two to three times a day even in freezing cold weather with a heated jacket on, she may have even declined more.

I am angry about this because this is no way to treat my mother even though the aides and nurses have been wonderful to her... it's not enough. They cannot do nor do they have time to do what I would do if I was in there, and the facility has not made up for the lack of socialization and attention that she needed.

Many of the elderly across the state of Ohio have declined and even died from isolation and/or covid. It is inhumane and criminal what has happened to our loved ones in the nursing home; not to mention what it has done to the family members.

We need to see our parents and loved ones again and they need to see us. There is no reason we can't go in and wear a mask and wear gloves and be with our loved ones after being tested just like the nurses and aides are. My mom has had the vaccine and I am planning to get it as soon as I am called.

This whole year has been stolen from us because of politics or because of lack of compassion from the government or because of downright ignorance.

What is wrong with this country that they would allow this to happen to our loved ones in the nursing home? Do we not have any sense... can we not figure out how to protect our loved ones from a virus?!

A whole year is too long. We need in. We need to not be rejected anymore and our parents need and deserve to have their family see them without being controlled anymore. It's been devastating.

Please help us!

Cynthia Woodburn