



March 11, 2021

**Testimony to the House Families, Aging and Human Services Subcommittee  
Re: HB 120**

Chairman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of HB120 regarding Compassionate Caregivers. The Bill has undergone many changes since its initial introduction. Many of the changes are in response to concerns raised by LTC providers. The sponsors listened to the very real concerns of providers, like ourselves in supporting this measure initially. While our Association, as the bill's sponsors, saw the need for increased interaction with family and friends for our residents, we were hesitant given the surge of the pandemic at that time and staffing challenges.

But a new dawn has risen with the advent of the vaccines. While we are still learning much about them, they offer a level of protection to our residents that prior to this time was not available. Now does seem like the time to support this measure. While we still have some concerns, primarily surrounding an increased staffing burden, overall we find the measure to be in general alignment with the existing 6th Visitation Order with some appropriate expansions.

We appreciate that the Bill requires prior scheduling with the facility so that appropriate staffing can be planned or arranged. Additionally, we are grateful for the flexibility in terms of PPE supplies, especially in cases where transmission-based precautions would be necessary and allowing testing for visitors to be at the discretion of the provider. In cases, which are very limited in Assisted Living, where a resident is not vaccinated, we would encourage visitor testing and appropriate PPE in an effort to maintain protection for the resident.

OALA has been encouraging its members to offer as much indoor visitation as possible and to expand existing compassionate care visits. Assisted Living is anxious to begin safely returning to a more interactive and social engagement in its communities.

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