

Good afternoon and thank you chairperson, co-chair, Senate Health Committee, and our Honorable State Senators for giving me this opportunity to speak yet once again about HB120.

My name is Scott Reynolds. This my third time to speak on the importance of this bill allowing family members access to their loved one in a facility during a pandemic. As we are all aware, this bill has drug on long enough and sat in committee since April 21, 2021.

If you recall when I spoke in December of 2020, I asked that the word Covid be taken out of the bill and replaced with, "Any future pandemic or virus that would cripple us from being connected to loved ones in facilities". So much precious time that could have been spent with loved ones was stripped from us that we will never get back. I know there are steps and red tape to get a bill passed. But at the same time, this bill should have taken precedence over any other bill presented on the floor. We are talking about human lives here.

I'm baffled as to why everyone has not yet pushed this bill through, making it a top priority on everyone's agenda. Obviously, many of you have forgotten the pain and suffering thousands of family members went through during the China virus. As many of you are aware, I invited several of you to a window visit to see my mother and other elders that were being caged up with no compassion or comfort from a loved one. Not one of you took the time to experience the traumatic affects this was taking on us. Including an invitation to one state representative who was more concerned about image verses reality.

Let's refresh here for a moment. Obviously the guidelines that were set into place did not work. Elders were not just being subjected to only Covid, but dying of loneliness, the disconnect of loved ones, and the touch and compassion that any human craves and needs. Most importantly their own child. Looking back personally I had to watch my mother not die once but a little each day. Imagine if you will, being separated from your parent or child for 266 days! It's inhumane what we went through and watching our loved one being caged like a freak exhibit.

Obviously, as I stated above, the guidelines that were set into place at the beginning of the China virus did not work. Our elders were caged up like livestock yet staff came and went as they pleased, door dash running back and fourth delivering food, smoke breaks on facility grounds in groups, and many posts on social media showing staff living their life to the fullest. It was absolutely sickening to see. This is why we need HB120 passed ASAP.

If you recall when I spoke back in March of 2021, I made you all aware that facilities had no accountability during this time. I have to say my mother's facility treated here like a queen. As for others, not so much. Visiting my mother at the window I could see the deterioration and how unkept some of the other residents were. More than likely it was due to no one coming to visit them daily or just simply not having anyone to watch over them. This is why family members need to have access during any pandemic. To hold all facilities responsible for their

actions while someone from the outside can act as an extra set of eyes, insuring our elders are treated with respect and dignity, and facilities held accountable for their actions.

What is disheartening to see is new frivolous bills being introduced while lives are at stake. To sit back and see this bill sitting in a committee for almost a year is disgusting to say the least. We are seriously sitting here waiting to tweak a bill with new verbiage that should have been done from the beginning? This has to be one of the most despicable things I have ever witnessed in my life. I brought up this verbiage issue over 16 months ago to leave the word Covid out and have any future pandemic included in this bill.

Looking back and reflecting on this bill, I cannot stop thinking about my mother being there and fighting for me for all the years of my life. For my mother to be there all of my life through the good and bad, shouldn't we be there for them when they need us the most? Imagine being cut off from your child for 266 days while you watch them through a window as they don't understand what is going on.. It's despicable.

Having a mother with Alzheimer's she was stripped of all familiarity including her own child. The way things were handled absolutely took a toll on her, resulting in death. As well as for thousands of others.

In closing, I have to commend Representative Tracy Richardson for keeping this bill alive. Without her and Representative Mark Frazier I'm not sure we would be here today. Out of 99 seats in the house, 61 co-sponsors are supporting this bill. I would like to thank those 61 from the bottom of my heart. As for the 38 who I do not see as co-sponsors on this bill, shame on you. Get on board and get HB120 passed! These are human lives we are talking about. No human life should be used as a political pawn. Keep this in mind as this could very well be you one day asking for a hug from your child on the other side of a glass window.