

November 25, 2020

Chairman Ginter,
Vice Chairman Swearingen,
Ranking Member Howse,
Members of the House Aging
and Long-Term Care Committee,

My 92 year old mother is in a long-term care facility and the doors closed on her birthday, March 15th.

Before the shutdown I picked my mother up every day and took her for rides and to my house... sort of like Adult Day Care, and we had a lot of good times together.

My mother has some health problems and a little bit of dementia but I couldn't care for her 24/7 at home anymore. So I was using the nursing home as a way to help me take care of her, especially at night, but I was very involved with her during the day.

She was only able to walk, assisted, with her walker from her recliner to the bathroom or to her bed in her room at the facility. She could still pivot from the wheelchair to the toilet or to another chair but had to have help.

When the shutdown came she was forced to sit in her chair most all day long and the only contact I've been able to have with her is at her window and on the phone. I have visited her window over 500 times since March. We have missed all of the holidays, all of the seasons of spring, summer, and fall, birthdays, and most of all hugs and togetherness.

After sitting in her recliner day after day after day for eight months, my mom can't walk at all...the facility did their best but they don't have time to do the things I have time to do with her.

Now I'm afraid she is getting discouraged and losing hope. She wants me to come and get her. She can't hardly stand to sit in her room with the door closed and sit in her chair all day long and she can't move on her own at all except to reach forward and to the side.

She needs me to be with her before she deteriorates more in her mind and physically.

The lockdown has been devastating to many residents. They are very depressed and the employees are getting stressed because they work so hard and have so many people to care for without the help of family.

Please help us pass this bill so that one essential caregiver can go in and be with their loved one. It has been tragic that so many family members have lost this time with their loved ones and many residents have had to die alone.

I feel I should be able to be tested and wear the proper mask and gloves, whatever is needed to keep my mother and the other residents safe. I am probably safer than most of the employees at the nursing

home because I don't have family that I go home to everyday or kids in school. My husband and I take care of his mother and my father so we have been very careful about the virus.

Something needs to be done so that we can be with our loved ones again and help support them emotionally and physically because the nursing home is not able to meet their needs without our help.

Thank you so much for considering the House Bill. I hope you can see how important it is for families and for the residents who need us so desperately after almost nine months of this.

Cynthia Woodburn