

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 8

Unofficial Copy  
J3

2004 Regular Session  
4r1859

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By: **Delegate Cardin (By Request)**

Introduced and read first time: February 18, 2004

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Nurse Staffing Ratios in Nursing Homes**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting the nursing home industry to pursue a certain staffing  
4 goal; requesting nursing homes to provide certain staffing ratios to the  
5 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for dissemination to the public and  
6 the General Assembly; and requesting the Department to verify the staffing  
7 ratios in a certain manner.

8 WHEREAS, The 1999 report of the Task Force on Quality of Care in Maryland  
9 Nursing Facilities found that nursing home residents have more complex and acute  
10 medical needs than in previous decades and that quality of care in nursing homes has  
11 also declined; and

12 WHEREAS, The Task Force on Quality of Care in Maryland Nursing Facilities  
13 recommended establishing a minimum staffing standard of 4 hours per resident per  
14 day, strengthening regulations to allow the Department of Health and Mental  
15 Hygiene to set staffing ratios above the minimum standard when needed to meet  
16 increased resident acuity, and requiring nursing homes to post staffing on each unit  
17 for each shift in an area visible to residents, family, and visitors; and

18 WHEREAS, The 2001 report to Congress by Abt Associates on Appropriateness  
19 of Minimum Nurse Staffing Ratios in Nursing Homes found "strong and compelling  
20 evidence of the relationship between staffing ratios and quality of nursing home  
21 care"; and

22 WHEREAS, The Abt report also recommended that staffing information be  
23 made available to the general public to make informed decisions when choosing  
24 health care providers; and

25 WHEREAS, The 2002 United States General Accounting Office report entitled  
26 "Nursing Home Expenditures and Quality" found that, in the states studied, nursing  
27 hours per resident day were related to quality of care deficiencies, with homes  
28 providing more nursing hours being less likely to have identified quality problems  
29 than homes providing fewer nursing hours; now, therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the  
2 nursing home industry pursue a staffing goal of one nurse for every eight nursing  
3 home residents; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That each nursing home provide the Department of Health and  
5 Mental Hygiene with the nursing home's nurse staff ratio, for dissemination to the  
6 public and the General Assembly; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene verify,  
8 through qualified inspectors, a nursing home's reported nurse staff ratio upon  
9 request; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
11 Legislative Services to the Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor of Maryland;  
12 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and  
13 the Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates.