

HB0671_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0671- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Nursing Facilities - Medicaid Quality Assessment - Funding of Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

TO: Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and members of the Appropriations Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0671, **Nursing Facilities - Medicaid Quality Assessment - Funding of Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

This bill is personal to me. During my late son's hospitalization in long term and rehab nursing homes I often was forced, as his advocate, to meet with multiple members of the administration of those facilities to address problems with his care. In those facilities these staff members admitted to me that I was a strong advocate for my son and that was a very unusual occurrence for them. It seems most of their patients had no one to champion their continued care.

This bill will address that lack of people to be there for those patients by requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill at least 3% of the special funds collected from the Medicaid quality assessment imposed on certain nursing facilities to fund the operations of the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Every person in a nursing facility in Maryland must be offered and guaranteed the highest quality care available. The ombudsman can be their advocate to ensuring facilities are living up to that promise.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0671.