

Testimony in Support of HB 0945

Maryland House Health and Government Operations Committee

Re: House Bill 0945 – Nursing Homes – Complaint Investigations – Local Health Department Notification

Position: **SUPPORT**

My name is Terrell L. Sample, I speak as a daughter, caregiver, family member and advocate of humanity, whom has witnessed firsthand the adverse treatment of our vulnerable, elderly and disabled loved ones residing in Maryland Eastern Shore long-term care facilities. Their wellbeing is dependent upon systems where care and communication are compassionate, cohesive, and compliant.

My family's experience in one Wicomico County nursing home revealed serious failures that **no resident** should endure. On several occasions our loved one was left sitting in soiled diapers for unacceptable periods, leading to repeated urinary tract infections that worsened physical and behavioral symptoms. She incurred days when food trays were just left on her stand, no staff member came to assist or even inquired if she had nourishment for those days. Staff inattentiveness contributed to preventable falls, bruising, which evolved into hospital stays. The facility lacked adequate ostomy supplies, which caused further medical complications. Conditions inside the building were antiquated and unsanitary, soiled carpets and with rodents (mice) roaming about, sticky traps in resident's rooms near rear of beds or near vents or in closets. Additionally, many staff were not properly trained to care for residents with Alzheimer's or dementia. The culmination of each of these occurrences as we actively participated in her care coupled with our numerous attempts intervene to rectify the situation, we sought guidance from the Office of the Maryland Attorney General's Health Education and Advocacy Unit, Maryland Long-term care Ombudsman program to intervene, but to no avail, thus igniting our quest to actively seek new accommodations for our mother.

These are not isolated lapses—they are signs of systemic breakdowns that demand stronger oversight. When allegations of actual harm arise, local health departments must be notified immediately. They know the facilities, the history, and the community for which they are entrusted to serve, and their involvement can prevent harm from escalating.

HB 0945 strengthens accountability, improves coordination, and helps ensure that no resident falls through the cracks because agencies failed to communicate.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 0945.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrell L. Sample

Daughter, Caregiver, Advocate of Humanity and Maryland Resident