

Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 0945
Nursing Homes – Complaints – Notification and Consultation

Hearing Date: February 26, 2026 1PM

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of House Bill 0945, sponsored by Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes.

As a community leader serving families in Wicomico County, I have personally received concerns and complaints from residents and families regarding nursing home care. When loved ones experience neglect, inadequate attention, or potential harm, families often do not know where to turn. They reach out to trusted community leaders seeking answers, accountability, and action.

Too often, we are left without clear information about how complaints are being handled or whether local health officials are engaged in the process. That lack of transparency creates frustration. We want to see stronger local involvement when serious allegations arise. Our local health departments should not be on the sidelines when actual harm is being investigated within facilities operating in their own communities.

House Bill 0945 requires the Maryland Department of Health to notify and consult with local health departments when investigating complaints alleging actual harm. This coordination is critical. Local health departments understand the history of facilities, maintain relationships with community providers, and are positioned to respond quickly when patterns of concern emerge. Their direct involvement strengthens oversight and ensures that accountability is not delayed.

Families depend on long-term care facilities close to home. They deserve to know that when a complaint is lodged, every appropriate level of government is informed and engaged. HB 0945 reinforces shared responsibility and ensures that local public health leadership has a seat at the table.

This bill is a practical and necessary step toward improving transparency, responsiveness, and patient safety in Maryland's nursing homes.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 0945. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Monica Brooks
President, NAACP Wicomico County
Leader of Eastern Shore Branches of NAACP