

Testimony on SB704 by Reeba McEnny

Nursing Homes – Transfer of Ownership – Site Visits and Surveys

Position: Favorable

Madam Chair & Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Reeba McEnny, and I live in Baltimore, Maryland. I am a Certified Nursing Assistant/Geriatric Nursing Assistant, and I am also a proud member of 1199SEIU. Come this June, I will have been a caregiver for 20 years.

I have been employed at the nursing home where I currently work for 8 years. Recently, this nursing home was sold to a new owner, one who is not based in Maryland. My co-workers and I were shocked when our facility was sold, it felt like we were the last to learn about it. Without warning, the building and our livelihoods were transferred to a new owner.

Many of us were worried about our future and the residents we cared for.

The two years that have followed since our new ownership came into effect have been chaotic. We have seen many administrators and staff come and go. We have also had to fight to maintain the wages that we were supposed to be paid under our union contract. I don't believe we would have gotten any wage increases even during the pandemic when our jobs were most hazardous, if we hadn't had a contract and the ability to fight for them together with our union.

Workers aren't the only ones affected when new owners take over a nursing home. Staffing and scheduling changes occur as well, and aides are often moved around to different units. This can upset residents, who develop relationships with their caregivers. Their family members also worry when these changes occur.

I believe that state inspections are important to make sure that we have what we need to provide the best care we can. We need the correct amount of staffing, and not just for CNA/GNAs like me, but dietary workers and housekeepers as well. Having the state come in more often during the first year of an ownership change to review the new owner's practices would be a great step to protect staff and residents.

Extra monitoring of any company that buys a nursing home in Maryland from out-of-state is a smart thing to do. I urge this committee for a **favorable report** of Senate Bill 704.

Thank you,

Reeba McEnny