



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 7

February 4, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
240 Taylor House Office Building
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 429, *Health Facilities - Delegation of Inspection Authority - Nursing Homes*

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk,

I urge the Committee to support House Bill 429, Health Facilities - Delegation of Inspection Authority - Nursing Homes, which will greatly enhance our ability to ensure safe and healthy conditions in nursing home facilities by once again allowing counties the authority to conduct site visits and full surveys.

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) routinely inspected nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the County until July 1, 2021, when the State cancelled its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County.¹ However, the State has not fulfilled its responsibility to continue these inspections, leaving hundreds of some of our most vulnerable residents at-risk. A July 2023 report by the Montgomery County Council's Office of Legislative Oversight found that decades of underfunding and staff shortages had exacerbated this lack of oversight, citing data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) showing 80 percent of nursing homes in the State had gone at least 16 months without a standard survey.²

This is an unacceptable gap in our collective responsibility to ensure safe and healthy conditions for older adults. As a member of the County Council's Health and Human Services Committee, this has been a recurring issue and major concern for our constituents and leading

¹ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/LandR/NursingHome.html>

² https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2023_reports/OLO-Report2023-7.pdf

advocates for the aging community. The County's [Commission on Aging](#) recently highlighted this need by calling for us to:³

“Advocate with State delegation and other key actors: to enact legislation enabling delegation authority to Counties for nursing home inspections; to re-establish delegation of nursing home inspections to County via MOU with State (pending permission from CMS), to fully restore the budget for inspections and on-site complaint inspections by the LTCO with additional funding from the State. After executing the MOU, request that the County allocate Funding of an appropriate amount to hire, train, and onboard a team of nursing home inspectors.”

I stand ready to support this urgently needed solution to provide the basic level of safety that residents of nursing homes deserve and that is almost completely lacking at this time. Thank you Vice Chair Cullison for your leadership and I urge the Committee to support this legislation.

Very truly yours,



Dawn Luedtke
Montgomery County Councilmember
District 7

cc: Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee