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18 August 2008

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Ms. Gail Weidman  
Office of Long Term Care Living  
Bureau of Policy and Strategic Planning  
Department of Public Welfare  
P.O. Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

RE: Regulation # 14-514 (#2712) on assisted living communities

Dear Ms. Weidman:

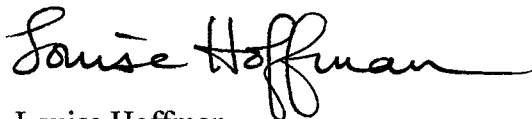
These are my comments for consideration during the public response period on these proposed new regulations. I think they're overdue and much needed.

My mother benefited from a wonderful assisted living community in Maryland, and I may well want to live in one myself in the future. Lack of regulation is NO way to ensure quality services and rights for residents! Having investigated the whole industry when my mother was looking for assisted living, I found out more than most in the public.

The proposed regulations proposed strike me as minimal--the basics needed to start the process. The costs should be encompassed within normal fees for quality assisted living. Prospective residents should have clear explanations of services, costs, their own rights, etc. Without those, a cheaper price would be of little use to them and might even hurt them and their families. Even well-meaning private operators (like the gentleman from the North Ridge Assisted Living Center, whose comments are posted on the IRRC website) can wind up unintentionally disadvantaging their residents, without such regulations. We do NOT need another scandal like that with some "personal care" homes in recent years! There's no substitute for clear, well-administered regulations, especially when such a vulnerable population is concerned.

The industry is protesting these regulations and associated costs, but I've seen the good quality that results from clear and effective state regulation elsewhere. I am a member of AARP and support their advocacy for these regulations. Pennsylvania is behind the curve nationally. There is a growing population of Pennsylvanians approaching their senior years; please adopt these regulations in OUR interest, not that of an industry that probably would protest any regulation at all. Passage of these regulations could benefit even poor seniors, if the Commonwealth obtains federal approval to spend Medicaid funds on assisted living. This would allow more seniors more choices, and directly counter the industry's argument that the regulations would hurt those on lower incomes.

Sincerely yours,



Louise Hoffman

✓ Cc: IRRC