



August 2, 2021

Department of Health

625 Forster St,

Harrisburg, PA 17120

Attn: Lori Gutierrez, Deputy Secretary

Office of Policy

Re: Rulemaking 10-221 (Long-Term Care Facilities, Proposed Rulemaking 1)

To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept this letter of comment on the recently proposed rule, "Department of Health, Title 28. Health and Safety, Part IV. Health Facilities, Subpart C. Long Term Care Facilities, 28 Pa. Code §§201.1-201.3: 211.12(i), Long Term Care Nursing Facilities".

This letter is being sent on behalf of the residents and direct care staff of Faith Friendship Villa. Our community is a 74 - bed personal care home residence located in Lancaster county, Mountville, Pennsylvania. We have 23+ employees and provide services to 74 residents when adequately staffed.

We have grave concerns regarding the amendments of the regulation to increase the required minimum number of hours of general nursing care from 2.7 to 4.1 hours of direct resident care for each resident residing in a nursing facility. Even though, as a licensed personal care home operating in Pennsylvania, our community is not directly impacted by the proposed provisions, we are concerned that there will be unintended consequences to other providers in the long-term care continuum.

Workforce availability is currently unheard of and by far the worst I have seen it since 1989 when I began in this business. Applicants do not show up for the interview or do not respond to the emails, phone calls or texts even though they say they are interested in the position offered.

Another concern is that Faith Friendship is unable to fill all of our beds because of inadequate staffing. That is an issue we currently face which is in turn affecting our bottom line financially. We serve the low-

income person on SSI and are turning potential residents away due to our current staff shortage. This is not helping the poor in our communities who have no other place to live. This should be a concern of the state as well.

Our staff make many contacts throughout the hiring process in an attempt to keep the applicant in the loop. We have also increased our starting pay rate to keep up with the competition as well as other non-health care related jobs in the market place.

To be candid, the increase to 4.1 hours of direct resident nursing care in nursing facilities will potentially impact our community's ability to recruit and retain the staffing needed to ensure quality care to the residents we serve.

If nursing homes will be required to hire more staff hours this will definitely impact personal care homes. In essence, it will take possible candidates away from our facilities when we are already in dire straits with staff shortages. Personal care homes are in competition with other homes in the area including nursing facilities. Whether the state realizes it or not a mandatory staffing increase will create unintended consequences for the workforce in the personal care arena as well as in nursing.

Thank you for your time in reviewing and considering my comments. I am hopeful that the Department of Health will amend the provisions contained in §211.12(i) in a manner that will address the concerns raised in my comments.

Sincerely,

Harry Yoder

Interim Executive Director