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Form Letter A
3184-3185

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Independent Regulatory
Review Commission

Dear Pennsylvania Department of Health,

I am writing to express my support for lifting Pennsylvania's Safe Staffing Standard to 4.1 hours per resident per day for nursing homes, as proposed in the PA Department of Health's proposed updates announced on July 21st, 2021 (<https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/Health-Details.aspx?newsid=1530&fbclid=IwAR3KZwCHTE-Ib-YPXzEli6heFTvinEp031VjiEzw9i4-8ChjQMx53qu8PRo>).

For decades, our long-term care system has faced dwindling staffing, lower care standards, and revelations of fraud, abuse, and neglect. The result is a system that does not prioritize residents or caregivers, and could not withstand a global pandemic—over 13,000 nursing home residents died from COVID, and countless workers lost their lives and fell ill.

The failures are in part to archaic state nursing home regulations, which have not been updated in 30 years.

But finally the demands of workers, residents, and advocates have been heard.

Pennsylvania's archaic nursing home regulations include staffing standards that fall well below what's needed to provide quality care. Under the current regulations, residents are only required to receive 2.7 hours of care per day. For years, we have been calling for a new safe staffing standard lifting that requirement to 4.1 hours, the minimum standard recommended by elder care experts, and with this proposed update, Governor Wolf has taken a big step towards making that a reality.

These reforms are key to transforming Pennsylvania nursing homes to protect residents and those who care for them.

I urge you to do everything in your power to support the Wolf Administration's nursing home regulation reform.

Sincerely,