

H.R. 4704 – Nursing Home CARE Act
Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz & Rep. Tim Walberg

Supported by:

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, Caring Across Generations, Coalition of Geriatric Nursing Organizations, Justice in Aging, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM), National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA), National Association of Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen (NALLTCO), National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA), National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsmen (NASOP), National Council on Aging (NCOA), National Association of Social Workers, WISER Women

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in cosponsoring H.R. 4704, the Nursing Home Comfortable Air Ready for Emergencies (CARE) Act, to protect the welfare of nursing home residents during and after an emergency.

Following one of the worst hurricane seasons on record, appalling stories emerged from nursing home residents, including in Hollywood, FL where fragile loved ones suffered three grueling days without central air conditioning and the harrowing number of fatalities climbed to at least 13. This horrific incident made it clear that we need to bolster nursing home safety measures and work together to protect the most vulnerable among us.

The Nursing Home CARE Act would:

- Codify the CMS Emergency Preparedness rule of 2016 for nursing homes.
- Mandate that facilities have in place an alternate source of energy capable of powering heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system following a natural disaster for at least 96 hours.
- Increase civil money penalties for facilities found out of compliance with CMS Conditions of Participation.
- Direct the Secretary of HHS to review facilities based on the Emergency Preparedness (EP) rule and publish the findings on the Nursing Home Compare website.
- Create a loan fund for smaller facilities, or those serving more low-income residents, to come into compliance. Facilities must have a monthly rate of less than \$6,000 for private rooms, or have fewer than 50 beds, to qualify.
- Require states to prioritize nursing homes in the same manner as hospitals are prioritized in All-Hazards Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans, and to include in those plans information on how utilities plan to ensure that nursing homes return to functioning as soon as practicable following a disaster.

Please join us in making these commonsense reforms to protect nursing home residents and prevent similar tragedies from happening again. If you have any questions or wish to cosponsor, please contact Kaitlyn Lane in Rep. Wasserman Schultz's office at Kaitlyn.Lane@mail.house.gov or Jonathan Hirte in Rep. Walberg's office at Jonathan.Hirte@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Tim Walberg

Member of Congress

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