



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 562

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation that would ease nursing home staffing and capacity constraints by increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates by at least 20 percent.

By Council Members Narcisse and Hudson

Whereas, According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, New York State has the second highest number of nursing home residents in the country, with 92,784 residents in certified nursing facilities as of 2022; and

Whereas, According to the New York State Department of Health, nearly 30 percent (169 of 612) of all nursing homes in New York State are located within New York City; and

Whereas, According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, approximately 70 percent of nursing home residents in New York use Medicaid to pay for their care; and

Whereas, According to the Alliance for Senior Care, New York State's Medicaid reimbursement rates for nursing homes have increased by just 1 percent since 2008 while operating costs have increased by 42 percent during the same period; and

Whereas, According to United Healthcare Workers, the current Medicaid rates for nursing homes only cover 76 percent of the cost of providing care; and

Whereas, Residents in New York's nursing homes have not been receiving a sufficient level of services for years and the failures of the nursing home industry in New York gained widespread attention during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Staff turnover in nursing homes had reached alarming heights long before the pandemic, with average turnover rates totaling 94% in 2017 and 2018, according to a 2021 article in Health Affairs; and

Whereas, A January 2021 report by the New York Attorney General’s Office found that already low staffing levels in New York State “decreased further to especially dangerous levels in some homes” during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Nursing home staff and administrators report that staffing shortages influence their ability to provide sufficient and consistent support to residents, including with eating, drinking, hygiene, and emotional support; and

Whereas, In 2021, New York State amended the public health law to require nursing facilities to maintain average staffing hours equal to three-and-a-half hours of care per resident per day; and

Whereas, According to a 2020 report by the New York State Department of Health, nursing homes have to hire 45,000 additional care workers at a cost of about \$2 billion, to comply with the safe staffing law’s standards; and

Whereas, SEIU 1199 reports that low wages and poor benefits for nursing home staff have led many workers to seek employment elsewhere; and

Whereas, Without additional resources, nursing homes are not able to cover the full cost of care is covered and have the necessary resources to not only meet existing workforce challenges, but also comply with staffing mandates; now, therefore, be it,

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation that would ease nursing home staffing and capacity constraints by increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates by at least 20 percent.

NM
LS # 12581
4/4/2023