



John Weir, President
Sarah F. Wells, Executive Director

Ph: 202.332.2275
Fax: 202.332.2949
www.theconsumervoice.org

January 14, 2011

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of consumers of long-term care services and their families, we strongly urge you to oppose repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

The Consumer Voice (formerly NCCNHR) has represented long-term care recipients and their families, citizen advocacy groups, long-term care ombudsmen, and other advocates for quality long-term care for more than 35 years. The Affordable Care Act is the first comprehensive federal law in a generation to address the quality of care in nursing homes that receive Medicare and Medicaid funding. It is the first to make prevention of elder abuse a national priority. And by increasing access to home and community-based services, it increases the potential that we will all have meaningful, quality choices in where and how we receive long-term care and services when we need them.

The Affordable Care Act will provide:

- Information to guide families in one of the most difficult decisions they ever make: the choice of a nursing home to care for a loved one. The ACA will expand information about the quality of individual nursing homes on the Medicare website, Nursing Home Compare; help consumers avoid homes that provide poor care; and create incentives for Medicare and Medicaid providers to improve staffing, services, and safety in their facilities.
- Public disclosure of nursing home owners and operators that will allow government regulators, as well as consumers, to identify who is responsible for care in facilities.
- More accountability in individual facilities and better oversight of corporations that operate nursing homes in multiple states.
- A stronger consumer complaint system.
- Disincentives for nursing homes to delay compliance by filing meritless appeals.
- Adequate notification and appropriate relocation of residents when facilities decide to close.
- Training of nursing assistants in the care of people with dementia and in preventing abuse.
- Better training for long-term care ombudsmen and state inspectors.
- National background checks to prevent persons with criminal histories from working with vulnerable adults who receive long-term care in institutions or in their own homes.
- Mandatory reporting of the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of anyone in a long-term care facility that receives federal funds.
- Better coordination among agencies that prevent, investigate, and prosecute neglect, exploitation, and abuse of the elderly.

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization founded in 1975 by Elma L. Holder that advocates for quality care and quality of life for consumers in all long-term-care settings.

Repeal of the Affordable Care Act would eliminate all of these urgently needed improvements in long-term care and protection of the elderly. Please vote against the bill to repeal the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Wells".

Sarah F. Wells
Executive Director