

Office of the State Long-Term Care
Ombudsman
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Haely Ordoyne, State Ombudsman

Laura Kelly, Governor

House Committee on Judiciary
February 13th, 2025

Testimony given by:
Haely Ordoyne, SLTCO
State Long Term Care Ombudsman

Chairwoman Humphries and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share the relevant impacts of HB 2359 on those we serve and the reasons why we support this bill.

The state long term care Ombudsman program is a federal program where we are resident directed advocates. We ensure civil and human rights and the overall well-being of people who reside in an adult care home. Our program gives a voice to those who might otherwise go unheard.

We do have two primary reasons why we support HB 2359.

1. The primary reason we support this bill is that it rightfully gives back the resident, the power over their life! Often, we receive complaints of a person receiving a guardianship and being completely stripped of decision-making abilities for their life. This quickly becomes an opportunity for the Guardian to have complete control and dictation over the individual in need of guardianship. We have witnessed guardians stopping friends from visiting a person, stopping any outside communication with the general community and even authorizing medical treatment that the individual does not want. The care homes will almost always follow the direction of the guardian even if it goes against the wishes of the resident. **This bill language would hold accountable the guardian to be the substitute decision maker and take direction of the resident rather than take control of the resident.**
2. **This bill would also hold accountable the appointed guardian to have an ongoing responsibility to the person in need of guardianship.** We often receive complaints relating to the guardian making decisions for someone that they have maybe physically visited once a year...if that. We currently are giving decision making abilities over someone's life to an individual with no guardrails in place to even have to know anything about that person on an ongoing basis.

For these reasons, our office and those we serve, support HB 2359. We appreciate your collaboration in ensuring the human, civil and resident rights of those that live in adult care homes across our state.

Sincerely,

Haely Ordoyne

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