

MEMO



DEC 14 2010

Senate of Pennsylvania

December 13, 2010

TO: ALL SENATORS

FROM: Stewart J. Greenleaf

Stewart

SUBJECT: Cosponsorship -- **Medicaid Bed Exception: Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs)**

I am reintroducing **Senate Bill 349**, exempting Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) from the Medical Assistance (MA) bed approval process and allowing nursing facilities operated by CCRCs to obtain MA certified beds under limited terms and conditions.

CCRCs provide independent living, assisted living, and nursing home care on a single campus. Residents access the health services they require without having to move to a new location for care. Current Department of Public Welfare policy on Long Term Care essentially places a moratorium on nursing homes who wish to either add new MA beds or seek to become MA certified. Some CCRCs, particularly those that serve middle-income seniors, have residents who truly exhaust their assets. Many other states have adopted policies granting CCRCs access to a very limited number of MA beds.

This legislation makes sense because it would allow seniors to receive services in the settings of their choice. Presently, state policy requires a CCRC resident to leave his or her home if he or she needs MA in the nursing home component of a CCRC and the facility either has no MA certified beds or needs additional MA beds. This policy can lead to spouses being forced to separate because one spouse has spent down through his or her assets and needs MA in a nursing home. The current policy also disrupts the life of seniors who could be adequately cared for at the nursing home within their CCRC.

For those seniors who do spend down their resources, Pennsylvania should permit them to access MA benefits at the CCRC. This legislation provides an avenue for CCRCs to access MA beds. This legislation will help allow seniors to age in place and prevent them from being forced to move to a new location once they spend-down their assets.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at psnively@pasen.gov.