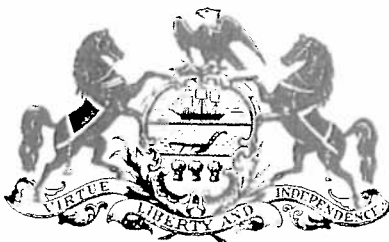


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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** All House Members

**FROM:** Representative Bernie O'Neill 

**DATE:** January 11, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Medical Assistance Bed Transfers for Nursing Facilities – former HR 967

I will be introducing legislation exempting nursing facilities from the Medical Assistance bed approval process and allowing such facilities to obtain Medical Assistance certified beds under limited terms and conditions.

The legislation provides that when a licensed nursing facility has a need for beds certified by the Medical Assistance program, the facility may obtain these beds through an application to the Department of Public Welfare. No new MA beds would enter the system, rather, the Department would solicit unused beds from facilities throughout the state in order to transfer them to the facility in need. This process would make Medical Assistance beds readily available to nursing homes that are in need of them while at the same time utilizing existing Medical Assistance beds statewide without bringing additional beds into the Medical Assistance program. In fact, by including the requirement that nursing facilities purchase two times the number of beds they need, it will allow DPW to reduce the number of total beds certified for MA.

Currently, nursing facilities do not have a process in which they can request beds to be certified under the Medical Assistance program. When a resident of a nursing facility that does not have an available certified Medical Assistance bed exhausts their resources and becomes Medical Assistance eligible they must relocate. This places our senior citizens in a vulnerable position as they are forced to move from an environment that is comfortable for them and disrupts the continuity of care. Under my legislation seniors would not have to face the difficulties of relocation and would be able to stay in a care setting that meets their health needs and provide a sense of security about where they will reside in the future.

Several states have policies that permit nursing facilities to obtain Medical Assistance beds under certain conditions, among those being Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Florida, New York and Texas. These states have recognized that allowing nursing facilities to obtain Medical Assistance beds helps foster a more desirable housing and care setting for seniors. I believe residents of Pennsylvania should be afforded a similar sense of security.

If you are interested in cosponsoring this legislation please contact Connie McClure in my Harrisburg office at 705-7170 or e-mail [cmclure@pahousegop.com](mailto:cmclure@pahousegop.com).