



March 26, 2025

House Committee on Health and Human Services
Rhode Island State House
househealthandhumanservices@rilegislature.gov

Re: **Testimony SUPPORTING House Bill 5257**, creating a Nursing Home Workforce Standards Advisory Board

Dear Chair Donovan and Honorable Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of House Bill 5257.

Advocates for Better Care in Rhode Island represents the rights and interests of residents of long-term care facilities in RI, and works towards resident empowerment, improved care, and an improved quality of life for residents. We profess no expertise in labor matters, but we do know this:

- There is a crisis of poor care, unsafe staffing levels, and poverty-inducing wages in RI nursing homes.
- Resident care is improved when staff earn a living wage.
- Resident care is improved when there are adequate numbers of well-trained direct care staff with adequate supervision.
- Some independent and non-profit facility owners/administrators prioritize resident care and staff support, and some struggle financially.
- Some for-profit facility owners cut every corner, hide massive profits, engage in wage theft and Medicare fraud, file for receivership under false pretenses, or otherwise cheat residents, staff, and taxpayers.
- The Workforce Standards Advisory Board is currently our best hope for bringing all stakeholders, not just the most powerful ones, to the table to achieve sustainable solutions in wages, staffing, staff support, and training that will ultimately improve care and quality of life for Rhode Island's vulnerable nursing home residents.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to support HB5257.

Thank you for your time and attention, and for all of your work on behalf of all Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Gerard,
ABC-RI