

My name is Kristine Struminsky.

I currently live in Montpelier, VT, and was born and raised in Rhode Island.

My 89 year old mother is currently lives in an assisted living facility in Rhode Island.

I am reaching out to you in SUPPORT of HR 7059, making an appropriation of \$100,000 to the RI Office of Healthy Aging for the RI Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

The Ombudsman program is a critical link to both in state AND out-of-state family members who are caregivers for their senior parent/s or family members.

The Ombudsman program is a vital link in advocating for our senior population.

My Mother and I have called upon the Ombudsman several times - including during a critical situation where my Mother did not have proper heat in her room for over one week.

They assisted immediately in our situation, and educated us on the requirements for a properly heated, safe living space, and they also intervened directly with our facility to help resolve the situation.

The Ombusman program also facilitated the opportunity for the creation of a Resident Council at our facility. The monthly meetings have opened a direct channel of communication between the residents and the facility management, and have created a path of accountability.

I give extremely high praise to the Ombudsman who attends my Mom's facility Resident Council Meetings - as she often helps decipher (and follow up) on concerns, including those that require immediate attention.

Please support this Bill and enable the Ombudsman program to continue to reach and support our seniors, their family, & their caregivers, as well as being an integral part providing and maintaining open communication with the management staff of all Rhode Island nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

While you may currently not have senior citizen family members in your own family, I assure you... that time often comes sooner than you would have ever anticipated.

Having the resource of the Ombudsman program is an incredible benefit to our society, and a respectful way to assure proper care for the generations before us.

Kind Regards,

Kristine Struminsky