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From: Mary Beth Meehan <mbm@marybethmeehan.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:35 PM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee
Subject: Testimony re: cameras and long-term care

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March 19, 2026

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

Re: Testimony supporting H7624, H7927, H7928, and H7929, all to protect the rights, equity, and well-being of residents in assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

Dear Chair Donovan and Honorable Committee Members,

My 96-year-old mother resides in an assisted living facility in East Providence, where I recently moved her after a very difficult experience at Wingate Residences on Blackstone Boulevard, on Providence's East Side. At Wingate Blackstone, there were discrepancies between the care they insisted my mother required and was receiving and the care my mother reported to me that she was receiving. Administrators and staff told me that she required between 30-60 minutes of bathing and grooming each day, at an extra charge of \$1600.00 per month on top of her base rent of \$5,287.00. When my mother insisted that she was in fact **not** getting this care — nor did she require it — **administrators and staff tried to persuade both my mother and me that she was receiving the care but forgetting it.**

It was not until I placed a camera in her private room for eight days that I had clear evidence my mother was caring for herself independently every day—until staff discovered the camera. Aside from the \$1600.00 per month that the facility charged us for this non-existent care, this was psychological abuse: cruelly gaslighting a woman who understood her own experiences **and** **misrepresenting her physical and mental health to her family, in order to charge fees for care never provided.**

In addition, **administrators and staff falsified care records to indicate that my mother was receiving this care.** I have created a spreadsheet that compares video footage provided by the camera with the care logs that they provided, and in no instance were they providing such care.

I share this experience to illustrate why the bills before you today matter.

HB 7927: I paid \$75 for the camera, which needed to be connected to my mother's internet service and my iPhone so that I could monitor my mother's care. It was necessary to be able to download this footage to a laptop using photo editing software. Residents and families who cannot afford these services and technology would be at a disadvantage from monitoring the truth about their loved one.

HB 7928: Had I been able to meet independently with other family members at that facility, we could have shared our experiences and perhaps discovered that what happened to my mother was not an isolated incident. It is far easier to mislead one mother and daughter than it is to mislead an organized group of family members who are talking to each other.

HB 7624: I would like to believe that the Rhode Island Department of Health would connect the dots when reviewing care logs and can do the math of whether a staff the size of Wingate's can physically and logistically provide the services listed on each resident's bill. (In my video footage, there are staff members named on the care log I was given who never came into my mother's room at all.) But if surveys are conducted only every two years, the likelihood of catching and correcting that kind of fraud is cut in half.

HB 7929: Extra fees are the bread and butter of the assisted living industry. If we add up the months that we were charged for care we did not receive, the legal fees she paid to try to get to the bottom of this situation, the security deposit Wingate Blackstone withheld from my mother, and the bill that we are still receiving from them for breaking their 45-day notice clause, the cost to my mother for their fraudulent behavior has been upwards of \$25,000.00. The thought of allowing a for-profit facility like Wingate to bill for an extra month after a resident's death seems to be an absurd abuse of such vulnerable families.

All four of these bills represent basic consumer protection, equity, safety, and accountability for Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents and their families. I respectfully urge you to set aside any industry claims of hardship and support these bills. I do not believe that my mother's experience is unique. That is exactly the problem these bills are designed to solve.

Thank you for your time, and for your commitment to Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Meehan