



The Beacon

A Newsletter for Long-Term Care Residents

July 2025

RAY DIFRANCESCO HONORED FOR NURSING HOME RESIDENT ADVOCACY

Congratulations to Ray DiFrancesco, a founding member of New Jersey Nursing Home Residents United, who received the Elder Protection Task Force's 2025 Award of Excellence to recognize his efforts toward empowering himself and other nursing home residents to self-advocate.

Ray received the award June 13 during a World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event hosted at the Monroe Township Senior Center by the NJ Attorney General, Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor, and the Elder Protection Task Force. Pictured to the right, from left to right: Rich King, Deputy Chief of Detectives, Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor; Heather Hadley, Bureau Chief, Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit; Ray; and Al Garcia, Interim Insurance Fraud Prosecutor.



Earlier in the day, Ray and Eliz Speidel, Director of Community Engagement (*pictured left*) for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman provided an overview of how the Residents United group and Community Engagement work to educate people about what happens in nursing homes and ensure that residents' wishes are centered in policy and legislative initiatives.

NEW DEADLINE! 2025 Resident's Voice Challenge

The Consumer Voice is accepting submissions for a coffee table book to mark the organization's 50th anniversary.

Residents may submit essays or poems (50 words or less), or posters, paintings and drawings that illustrate the theme

Stand with Me.

The deadline is Friday, July 11. Learn more at

<https://tinyurl.com/yc58kvn3>.

Medicaid Cuts Still on the Table

The U.S. Senate is debating a budget bill approved by the House in May. If the Senate amends the bill, as expected, the House will have to vote again.

Nonpartisan analysts project that the House bill would cut Medicaid by \$800 billion, causing more than 10 million people to lose health coverage and triggering a \$500 billion cut in Medicare.

How you can help. Have your ZIP code ready and call 866-426-2631 to be connected to your Congress people. Tell them **SAVE MEDICAID!**

ASSEMBLY TO VOTE ON BILL SAFEGUARDING THE INTERESTS OF RESIDENTS

Measures to protect the legal and financial interests of long-term care residents moved one step closer to becoming law when the Assembly Health Committee approved Bill A1888 (S1962) on June 12. The next step will be a vote by the full Assembly, which is not yet scheduled. If approved, the bill will head to Gov. Phil Murphy's desk for his signature. The Senate approved the bill in March 2024. Here are elements of the bill:

What Happens Now	What Bill A1888 Does
People affiliated with long-term care facilities sometimes obtain power of attorney for residents or individuals in the admission process. *Obvious conflict of interest.	Anyone affiliated with a long-term care facility is prohibited from doing this. Exception: People affiliated with long-term care facilities may represent residents who are family members.
Facilities may include an arbitration agreement in the agreement that residents sign before admission. The agreement typically restricts the resident's right to pursue future legal action to the facility's benefit.	Long-term care facilities must use a new standard admission agreement. Arbitration agreements must be separate AND residents must be informed that they do not have to sign the agreement to be admitted.
Non-lawyer <i>Medicaid</i> assistors help residents or individuals involved in the admission process apply for Medicaid. These people may have conflicts of interest and lack the expertise needed to advise residents appropriately.	Medicaid assistors must receive training and disclose any financial ties to a long-term care facility. Residents and their families must be informed that they have the right to independent counsel.

What's Up with the PNA?

The effort to increase the personal needs from \$50 to \$140 a month continues. Watch for updates in upcoming editions of The Beacon.

HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS & PHRASES

WREFSKIRO _____ TAPROTICI _____
DOL ROYGL _____ ASPKRELSR _____

Fireworks, Old Glory, Patriotic, Sparklers

New Jersey Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Laurie Facciarossa Brewer, LTC Ombudsman

www.NJ.GOV/LTCO

FOLLOW US

