



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Department  
Office of Governor Deval L. Patrick  
Press Release**

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**GOVERNOR PATRICK SIGNS LEGISLATION TO FURTHER  
PROTECT LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS AND  
THEIR FAMILIES**



Governor Patrick signs "An Act Protecting Nursing Home Residents." (Photo credit: Eugena Ossi/Governor's Office)

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*Text-Only Version Follows*

BOSTON – Friday, July 30, 2010 — Governor Patrick today signed into law a bill that will ensure that long-term care facilities distribute to each new resident, as well as his or her family member of health care proxy, important information about the laws and regulations governing those facilities. The legislation, "An Act to Protect Nursing Home Residents" (H 4637) will require the Department of Public Health to write and produce an informational document outlining the state laws and regulations relative to nursing homes, rest homes and long-term care facilities. This document must be distributed by the facility to each new resident and his or her loved one or health care proxy, upon admission.

"This law will ensure that residents of long-term care facilities and their loved ones have the information they need to understand and protect their rights during vulnerable times," said Governor Patrick.

Under this new law, long-term care facilities will also be required to maintain a record of signatures acknowledging receipt of the written materials.

"I am delighted that the combined efforts of my constituent Rachel Geller, my colleagues in the legislature, our partners at the Department of Public Health, and people across Massachusetts who joined together to protect their loved ones have resulted in this bill that I filed being signed into law by Governor Patrick. This simple but important law will make sure that consumers of nursing home care have the tools to ensure good care" said Representative Ruth B. Balser.

"This day is so important to me because it is all about Aunt Sally's legacy, which will be better nursing home care as well as the empowerment this law will give to nursing home residents and their families. It is too late for Aunt Sally, but it is not too late to help others, and that day begins now," said Dr. Rachel S. Geller, Ed.D.

Currently in Massachusetts, nearly one in five of residents is over the age of 60. By the end of the decade, nearly one in four residents will be a senior. The Patrick-Murray Administration understands that a successful Massachusetts depends on a strong continuum of supports which promote the integrity, rights and independence of elders and their caregivers. Governor Patrick, alongside Secretary of Elder Affairs, Ann L. Hartstein, has pursued an aging agenda that addresses the changing needs of a growing population of individuals who are 60 and over. Since taking office, the Governor has continued to support the needs of the elderly community by providing the following resources:

- Supporting the 349 local Councils on Aging by increasing per person spending from \$6.25 to \$7.00.
- Developed the state's first-ever Olmstead Plan to promote "Community First," independent living.
- Ensured that tens of thousands of seniors in Massachusetts could keep the heat on in winter through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).
- Helping to prepare for largest influx of seniors into the Massachusetts economy, Massachusetts is one of 25 states participating in the "Embrace Your Future" campaign.
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.