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NYS Health Facilities Association Statement on Nursing Home Staffing Legislation

Albany, New York — Stephen Hanse, President and CEO of the New York State Health Facilities Association (“NYSHFA”), a statewide organization representing over 325 not-for profit, for profit and government sponsored skilled nursing facilities issued the following statement today in response to nursing home staffing mandate bills being advanced in the Legislature.

“Nursing homes throughout New York would welcome the opportunity to have unfettered access to qualified staff, however, we oppose this one-size fits all legislation because it ignores the fact that New York does not have enough qualified workers to meet the mandate and it fails to provide enough funding to pay for the costs of the mandate.”

“Staffing is a highly complex issue that is comprised of multiple clinical variables that are unique to each nursing home and its resident population. The simplistic staffing ratios in this legislation do not in and of themselves improve the quality of care.”

“This legislation is based on outdated pre-pandemic 2019 staffing data and ignores the findings of Cornell University in the Department of Health August 2020 minimum staffing study that highlighted New York’s long-term care workforce crisis.”

“On top of New York’s nursing home workforce shortages, the State continues to underfund nursing home care. The average cost of providing 24-hour nursing home care in New York is \$266 per resident per day, but the State only pays an average of \$211 per resident per day – or \$8.79 per hour! New York’s chronic underfunding of Medicaid directly inhibits a nursing home’s ability to recruit and retain workers when hospitals can always pay nurses more.”

“If legislators were sincere about addressing the long-term care workforce crisis, they would hold public hearings and implement measures to meaningfully recruit and retain workers into long-term care and increase Medicaid reimbursement to nursing homes before imposing unworkable staffing mandates that are detached from reality.”

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