

Hello,

My name is Deann Stanley from Harvey, North Dakota. I am writing you in support of Senate Bill 2145. My mother is in Long Term Care in the Harvey Nursing home. It has been a very bumpy road for her since March of 2020. She has dementia/Alzheimer's. We moved my mom in to the nursing home in January 2020. We cared for her for well over a year after my dad had passed away.'

I will start off by saying that pre covid my mom loved the nursing home, we would visit her almost daily and take her out a couple of days. She adjusted well and was making her room her new home. The staff were wonderful and you could see they truly cared.

From March until present she has had emotional, physical and spiritual changes. She has started an antidepressant in summer of 2020 to help cope with her feelings of loneliness and sadness, we had to up the dose in November. She gained quite a bit of weight as she couldn't exercise as much being isolated in her room. She was unable to attend church when on lockdown so she questioned her faith because she could not openly attend services in their Catholic based nursing home. These should be basic things a human has access to: family, exercise or just space to walk and not confined to a room and to be able to attend church.

She missed her son being married in June because she did not want to be quarantined again because she had been locked in her room for so long with the lock down. She felt terrible but isolation in a small room is awful.

Her speech really declined because they did not get out of their rooms the majority of the time and less activities and talking so there fore she wasn't using that area of her brain. She is down a lot because she cannot read or write, she needs assistance dressing, bathing and daily living. It is not good for her to be alone or confined to a room.

We had an instance during a supervised visitation inside when she looked at me and broke down and began to cry because a worker was rough with her dressing and she was very down and hurt about the incident. If I hadn't of been able to visit her and for her to feel safe in my presence I would have never have known. It was addressed and handled. A couple days later visits were stopped and no longer could we see her and my heart sank thinking about her being isolated and what if it happened again? She wouldn't feel comfortable telling me on phone or iPad screen with someone watching. Often times emotion surfaces when we are in the presence of peace and comfort.

My brother took my mom to Mayo in October and she had to be quarantined again just for going to the doctor when she got back. That was where things just started to get hard again and sad. We had to increase her depression medication and she just wanted to get out and see her family. She would call crying. She missed thanksgiving.

She stayed in until after her birthday, December 5. She had a hard couple of days after her birthday. She had to open her cards and gifts alone or at times a worker would read her cards since she can not read. She got a bar of soap and she thought she could eat it and so she did eat some of it and had stomach aches and did not feel well. If one of us could have spent time with her to open gifts and cards that would not have happened and she would have known it was soap because we would have told her. We couldn't comfort her and she felt terrible that she did that. Someone told her it was soap and then she got really down on herself for "being so dumb".

She really went down hill and just wanted to be with our dad (heaven). She called a couple days later just balling and we knew we had to take her out and just love on her because she

was falling apart. We took her out everyday trying to give her a reason to wake up each day, smile, enjoy life a little bit. She did and she loved every minute and wanted to get out everyday. She spent Christmas in her house, with family, decorated her tree, and had everything that mattered in her life at her grasp. The staff gets this same right and a resident should have access to their family in their home. A nursing home is their home, they should be able to have us who cared for them in it.

In January she had a really bad fall and open her head and had a huge hematoma and bruising on her back and eye. She needed staples and a CT. It was so hard to not be able to see her or just provide her comfort. The next day she fell again and this time she opened the back of her head all the way down to her skull open and needed stitches and another CT and MRI. In these situations which she somehow survived, it is a shame that a familiar family member cannot come in to provide comfort, emotional support and offer care. We could take her out but that puts her more at risk for a fall with these incidents so we cant do her justice either way. Please consider these residents in situations where family is best.

The staff is doing the best they can but it is not doing them justice either. They are not meant to be everything to each resident. It was to be a partnership between family and facility. This is a burden on the staff and that is not right. We are waiting to be able to spend time with our loved ones - we shouldn't even have to ask!

Covid 19 found its way in the nursing home and workers in Harvey and took zero lives, but it still got in so what are we really doing here? They are humans and deserve more than isolation. They have a voice and its time for us to start listening to them. By keeping them "safe" which hasn't been successful, it is damaging them emotionally, mentally, and physically. With anyone with cognitive decline with Alzheimer's or dementia, their good days are limited and they are at their very best today. Let them live their good days surrounded by those who love them.

Thank you,

Deann Stanley