



February 18, 2004

Representative Morrison, Chair
House Health and Human Services
House Bill 2306

Good afternoon Chairman Morrison and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Ernest Kutzley and I am the Advocacy Director for AARP Kansas. AARP Kansas represents the views of our more than 350,000 members in the state of Kansas. Thank you for this opportunity to express our comments and opposition to House Bill 2306.

In 1987 Congress responded to widespread concern about poor nursing home quality by enacting the Nursing Home Reform Act, part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 (OBRA 1987). The Nursing Home Reform Act established state requirements for certifying nursing facilities that participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. The act established quality standards for nursing homes nationwide, established resident rights and defined the state survey and certification process needed to enforce the standards.

AARP believes that there is a need for effective oversight of nursing homes, combined with strong sanctions for health and safety violations. AARP opposes efforts to deregulate the nursing home industry and supports strong federal nursing home quality standards. To ensure quality in nursing homes that states should:

Monitor quality through performance-based outcome measures— States should use a common set of assessment and outcome measures to assess performance quality among all types of providers. Monitoring efforts should intensify as problems are detected in quality outcomes and as the complexity and intensity of services increase;

Ensure that survey results and other information regarding quality of care, including comparisons with other national standards when possible, are made available to the public in an easily comprehensible format and electronically if feasible—This information should be updated at least annually and the availability of this information should be publicized;

Collect information about nursing homes regarding quality of care, including staffing levels, and make this information available to consumers.

Therefore, AARP must oppose HB 2306. We respectfully urge this Committee to not approve this proposed legislation.

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Respectfully
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