



**Substitute Senate Bill No. 973**

**Public Act No. 21-194**

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE VOICE OF RESIDENTS AND FAMILY COUNCILS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) For purposes of this section, (1) "residents council" means a council elected and run by residents of a long-term care facility that brings concerns to management of such facility about residents' living conditions and care, (2) "family council" means a council comprised of family members of residents of long-term care facilities that brings concerns to management of such facility about residents' living conditions and care, and (3) "long-term care facility" means a nursing home facility, as defined in section 19a-490 of the general statutes, or a managed residential community, as defined in section 19a-693 of the general statutes, with assisted living services regulated by the Department of Public Health.

(b) Not later than three days after a state agency submits a legislative proposal to the General Assembly or posts a notice of intent on the eRegulations System proposing a new or revised regulation concerning living and care conditions at long-term care facilities, such agency shall inform the State Ombudsman, appointed pursuant to section 17a-405 of the general statutes, and the executive director of the Commission on

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Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, established pursuant to section 2-127 of the general statutes. The State Ombudsman and the executive director shall seek testimony from the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Residents Councils and from family councils concerning such legislative proposal or proposed regulation. For regulations other than those proposed pursuant to subsections (g) and (h) of section 4-168 of the general statutes, the State Ombudsman and the executive director shall immediately inform the members of the coalition and family councils that the agency will be required to hold a public hearing upon the request of fifteen or more persons not later than fourteen days after the date such notice of intent is posted on the eRegulations System. Such agency or legislative committee of cognizance shall accept testimony in a manner and format that provides for the greatest input from members of residents councils and family councils including, but not limited to, when permissible under the rules of such agency or committee and when practicable, remote testimony by such members via technology with audio or audio and video capabilities.

(c) Any state task force appointed by the General Assembly or by a state agency that is studying issues concerning living or care conditions at long-term care facilities shall include among members (1) representatives of residents councils, (2) representatives of family councils, and (3) the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging, or their designees. The chairpersons of such task force shall schedule meetings in a manner and format that provides for the greatest input from members of residents councils and family councils, including, but not limited to, when practicable, remote testimony by such members via technology with audio or video capabilities.