

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 SENATE  
4 RESOLUTION 19

By: Kirt

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7 AS INTRODUCED

8 A Resolution recognizing May as Older Americans  
9 Month; supporting and protecting the rights of  
nursing home residents; and directing distribution.

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12 WHEREAS, a National Pandemic Health Emergency was announced on  
13 March 13, 2020, and a state of emergency was announced in Oklahoma  
14 on March 15, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

15 WHEREAS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)  
16 were empowered to rapidly expand efforts to mitigate COVID-19; and

17 WHEREAS, Governor Stitt recommended on March 17, 2020, that  
18 Oklahomans follow the president's coronavirus guidelines, including  
19 guidance not to "visit nursing homes or retirement or long-term care  
20 facilities unless to provide critical assistance." On March 27,  
21 2020, visitors were prohibited from entering and visiting patients  
22 and residents at these facilities; and

23 WHEREAS, the State Department of Health reported on January 1,  
24 2021, that 760 Oklahoma nursing home residents had died from COVID-

1 19 while AARP reported that over 133,000 American nursing home  
2 residents had died, representing 31% and 39% of all Oklahoma and  
3 U.S. pandemic fatalities, respectively; and

4 WHEREAS, the U.S. Office of Inspector General reported in June  
5 2021 that the mortality rate for Medicare beneficiaries in nursing  
6 homes increased 32% in 2020, with 169,391 more deaths than 2019; and

7 WHEREAS, CMS expressed concern on April 7, 2022, about the  
8 impact on residents' health and safety by the waived regulations,  
9 and the length of time for which they had been waived; and

10 WHEREAS, no words or deeds can replace the loss of life or  
11 adequately convey the depth of our sorrows, but we can work together  
12 toward healing by recognizing all nursing home residents nationwide  
13 for their sacrifices during the COVID-19 national emergency.

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION  
15 OF THE 59TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

16 THAT the Oklahoma Senate hereby proclaims May 2023 as Older  
17 Americans Month.

18 THAT the Oklahoma Senate will join efforts with aging and  
19 resident advocacy organizations throughout the State of Oklahoma to  
20 support and protect the rights of nursing home residents year-round.

21 THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the 11 state  
22 agencies on aging.

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