



Assisted Living

Federation of America

September 15, 2008

Gail Weidman  
Office of Long Term Living  
Department of Public Welfare  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor Bertolino Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Dear Ms. Weidman:

On behalf of the Assisted Living Federation of America (ALFA) and the providers of professionally managed assisted living communities for seniors in Pennsylvania, I'd like to express my great disappointment with the proposed regulations promulgated to implement Pennsylvania Act 56 of 2007.

Pennsylvania Act 56 of 2007 was widely heralded for good reason by Pennsylvania's seniors, assisted living residents, providers and ALFA. Act 56 created an assisted living licensing category that was intended to allow seniors the ability to age in place and to provide an additional level of personal and supplemental health care services to meet the demand for these services by Pennsylvania's seniors. It created an opportunity to begin providing care for those frail elders who do not require the 24/7 skilled nursing services offered by nursing homes but who do need services beyond what a personal care home can typically provide.

Unfortunately, the proposed regulations do not reflect the clear intent of Act 56. They do not specify the kinds of services that assisted living residences can provide, how they should function, the requirements for staffing and training, and other critical information that consumers need to have in order to make informed decisions. Further, the proposed regulations are so ambiguous that the vast majority of current personal care home providers who could otherwise qualify for the new assisted living license will elect NOT to apply to become assisted living providers. This will ensure that thousands of seniors could unnecessarily be forced into skilled nursing facilities. This, in turn, would cost Pennsylvania and the American taxpayer millions in Medicaid long term care costs.

This can be avoided with specific and appropriate regulations for assisted living.