



National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs

January 20, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Alexander and Murray:

The National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NASOP) is pleased to support your legislation, the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015, which, among other things, would improve the capacity of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs to advocate for residents of long-term care facilities.

As you are well aware, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) identifies, investigates and resolves complaints made by or on behalf of residents of long-term care facilities that affect their health, safety, welfare, or rights. Clarifying that residents have regular, timely, private, and unimpeded access to LTCOP services strengthens residents' rights and their access to our program. Addressing organizational conflicts of interest ensures the independence of the LTCOP, thereby ensuring the voice of residents is carried to local, state, and federal governments. In addition, we support the bill's measures to prevent and respond to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation through increased training and data collection.

We applaud you for moving so quickly in the 114th Congress to reauthorize the Act. This sends a strong signal that providing services to help older Americans stay in their homes and protect them from harm when they live in long-term care facilities is a priority for Congress. NASOP enthusiastically supports your efforts and this important legislation that protects the rights of all residents of long-term care facilities.

We look forward to working with you as the Older Americans Act reauthorization process moves ahead.

Sincerely,

Patty Ducajet, LMSW

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