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## **ON BEHALF OF ADULT CARE FACILITIES ACROSS NY STATE, ESAAL TESTIFIES BEFORE NYS LEGISLATURE ON COVID CHALLENGES**

### **ESAAL Calls for Continued Support for Funding, PPE and Policy**

**Clifton Park, NY – August 6, 2020** - The Empire State Association of Assisted Living (ESAAL) provided testimony to the NYS Legislature’s Residential Health Care Facilities and COVID-19 Hearing on August 3, 2020.

Lisa Newcomb, ESAAL’s Executive Director provided testimony as the leading voice for Adult Care Facilities (ACFs) across New York.

“As a spokesperson for our industry, my goal was to educate and inform the legislature on the unique challenges that Assisted Living communities are facing during the pandemic, and ask them for their continued support in our key focus areas of funding, testing, PPE and policy”.

The Highlights of ESAAL’s Testimony:

- The repeated linking of ACFs with nursing homes in COVID policy has caused confusion for the public, the press, assisted living providers, residents and families.
- The COVID-19 data, as provided by the NYS Department of Health, reflects that the virus has had a substantially greater impact on the nursing home population than the assisted living population, with far fewer COVID-19 deaths in licensed ACFs than in nursing homes.
- ACFs have been largely left out of state and federal funding available to nursing home and other long-term care providers. Unforeseeable and significant costs associated with COVID threaten the existence of these providers.
- Testing: ESAAL recommends to the Administration a reduction in the frequency of staff testing while continuing all other staff screening measures.
- PPE: State and federal support will likely be needed should there be a resurgence. NYS must make ACFs a priority for PPE distribution.
- Allow new ACF’s to open! As we continue to work to protect today’s ACF residents from COVID, we must continue to provide for tomorrow’s residents. Currently, there are dozens of ACF

licensure applicants for new communities that are ready to open, many with a significant number of seniors in great and urgent need to move-in. Opening these communities needs to be a priority.

In response to legislators' questions, Lisa educated them about the way ACFs serving indigent residents are funded and that the moribund Supplemental Security Income (SSI) of \$41 per day needs to be increased. She also described ESAAL's efforts to advocate with the Department of Health to loosen the visitation rule that an ACF's entire visitation program must shut down for 28 days if one resident or staff person tests positive.

About Empire State Association of Assisted Living

Empire State Association of Assisted Living is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening New York State's assisted living sector and promoting the best interests of providers and residents. Founded in 1979, ESAAL is the only association that exclusively represents the assisted living industry, serving 300 Assisted Living Residences, Adult Homes, Enriched Housing Programs and Assisted Living Programs throughout New York State. These member residences are home to more than 30,000 seniors.

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