



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo calls for ‘immediate’ and ‘dramatic’ changes to nursing home industry

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO August 3, 2020

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ALBANY – With the New York State Senate conducting hearings today and next week regarding nursing homes and the coronavirus pandemic, New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, today called for a complete review and potential overhaul of the nursing home industry. More than 6,000 deaths have occurred in state-regulated nursing homes as a result of COVID-19.

Sen. Griffo said that any review that is undertaken must be comprised of all facets of the industry, including staffing, visitation, food and activities offered to nursing home residents.

“New York State’s handling of nursing homes during this public health crisis has resulted in the tragic loss of life and the unnecessary spread of the virus between staff and residents and is still deserving of an independent outside investigation as we have requested. It also has brought to light many systematic failures in the nursing home industry as a whole,” Sen. Griffo said. “We have seen too many nursing home residents die alone and in substandard and unacceptable conditions. I am calling for dramatic, substantive and immediate change in the nursing home industry, which cost so much but gives so little.”

Sen. Griffo said that now is the time to act on legislation that he has introduced that would provide for additional comfort, safety and peace of mind for those in nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

The bill (S3786) would allow for allow a patient or their family to have an electronic monitoring device such as Amazon's Alexa or Google Home installed in his or her room at the expense of the individual or their family. The legislation, which is in the Senate's Health Committee, would allow families to stay connected to their loved ones and ensure that they are receiving the proper care that they deserve.

Sen. Griffo has been an advocate for nursing home residents and their families during the coronavirus pandemic. He continues to bring nursing home-related concerns and issues to the attention of the administration, including calling on the Governor to stop COVID-19 positive patients from being readmitted to homes where no coronavirus cases exist. The latter policy was eventually reversed thanks to the efforts of Sen. Griffo and other advocates. The Senator also has called upon the state Department of Health, in consultation with clinical experts, to revise its guidance and to allow for expanded visitation at nursing homes and long-term care facilities. Such an expansion, with proper safety protocols and equipment in place, would allow more families to see their loved ones.

"I hear from constituents every day regarding problems that their loved ones have experienced in nursing homes," Sen. Griffo said. "Enough is enough. We must take action now to address the significant issues and bring about real change in the nursing home industry. Anything less is unacceptable."

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