



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo urges DOH to formulate essential caregiver regulations for nursing homes

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO May 21, 2021

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In a letter to state Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, urged the health department to formulate regulations that would allow essential caregivers in nursing homes.

Senate Bill 614-B, which provides for the authorization and regulation of visitation of compassionate care-giving visitors at nursing homes and residential health care facilities, was signed into law on March 29, 2021, and scheduled to go into effect 45 days later on May 13.

During that 45-day window, the Department of Health was required to formulate regulations for the policy, which did not happen. Some nursing homes have indicated that they will not implement the caregiver policy until the regulations have been promulgated.

The full text of Sen. Griffo's letter, which also was sent to Sen. Rachel May, D-Syracuse and chair of the Senate's Aging Committee, is below:

May 19, 2021

Howard Zucker, Commissioner  
New York State Department of Health  
Corning Tower  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Commissioner Zucker:

I am writing regarding S614-B/A1052-B, which provides for the authorization and regulation of visitation of compassionate care-giving visitors at nursing homes and residential health care facilities.

This legislation was signed into law by the Governor on March 29, 2021, and was scheduled to go into effect 45 days later on May 13, 2021. During that 45-day window, the state Department of Health (DOH) was required to formulate regulations for this policy. However, the department has failed to promulgate the required regulations, which is unacceptable. I have heard from nursing homes that have indicated that they will not implement this new policy until DOH has formulated the necessary regulations.

Nursing home residents, their families and essential caregivers are eagerly waiting for this policy to go into effect. We should not keep them waiting any longer. DOH should immediately formulate the required regulations so that nursing home residents get the physical, social and emotional support and assistance that they need.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo  
New York State Senator, 47th Senate District

C.C.

New York State Sen. Rachel May, 53rd Senate District