



To: Representative Will Carpenter, Chair, and Members, House Health and Human Services

From: Kylee Childs, Director of Government Affairs, LeadingAge Kansas

Date: March 3, 2025

LeadingAge Kansas is the state association for not-for-profit and mission-focused aging services. We have 150 member organizations across Kansas, which include not-for-profit nursing homes, retirement communities, hospital long-term care units, assisted living, home plus, senior housing, low-income housing, home health agencies, home and community-based service programs, PACE and Meals on Wheels. Our members serve more than 25,000 older Kansans each day and employ more than 20,000 people across the state.

Proponent Testimony for SB88

We support requiring the state Long-Term Care Ombudsman staff to receive training in memory care. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman's office is there to assist residents of nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other long-term care settings with:

- Educating residents and protecting their rights.
- Receiving and investigating complaints regarding violation of those rights.
- Facilitate discussions related to facility transfers or discharges and care planning.
- Reporting concerns without fear of retaliation.

On the flip side, the office is also there to support providers in:

- Addressing system issues and improving quality care.
- Offering guidance on residents' rights.
- Mediating disputes between residents, families, and facilities.

A lot of our providers have experienced encounters with the LTC Ombudsman's office that resulted in guidance negating the reality of a resident's condition, the legal implications when a Power of Attorney (POA) is involved in decision making on behalf of the resident, and a lack of understanding between residents' rights and regulatory requirements. We believe training on recognizing and understanding how to interact with residents with memory care diagnoses will improve these interactions and result in better outcomes for residents, their families, and providers.

We respectfully request the committee to pass SB88. I'm available for follow-up questions if needed.