

# LeadingAge and AHCA Statement on the Nursing Home Workforce Quality Act

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*Leading Industry Groups Support Legislation to End Mandatory CNA Training Lock-Outs*

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February 15, 2019 Washington D.C. -- [LeadingAge](#) and the [American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living](#) applaud today's introduction of the bi-partisan Nursing Home Workforce Quality Act. Leaders of both organizations, which combined represent the majority of America's skilled nursing and long-term care providers, praise [Rep. Sean Duffy \(R-WI\)](#) and Collin Peterson (D-MN) for their leadership on a long-overdue initiative that will support nursing homes' efforts to train staff and provide the highest quality of care to older adults.

The legislation introduced today modifies the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training lock-out mandated by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 (OBRA). It eliminates the statute's rigid provisions and grants CMS greater flexibility in reinstating providers' valuable CNA training programs.

"Nursing homes and other long-term care providers are grappling with a severe workforce shortage. The ability to train CNAs is crucial to building and maintaining a pipeline of qualified staff," said LeadingAge president and CEO Katie Smith Sloan. "We have advocated for this change to OBRA for many years. The introduction of this bill is a monumental step forward in our ongoing efforts to address the challenges providers face in recruiting and retaining workers."

Under current law, nursing homes assessed civil monetary penalties above a certain level on their annual survey automatically lose their authority to train staff to be CNAs for two years. The suspension is required even if the fines are unrelated to the quality of care given to residents or if the care deficiencies cited on the survey are unrelated to the

nursing home's CNA training program. CNAs, who provide direct care to residents, are critical members of every nursing home's care team.

"Effectively eliminating training programs for vital front-line staff threatens the quality of care we provide, particularly as the shortage of health care workers becomes more acute," said Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living. "CNAs are the backbone of quality care and the jobs that nursing homes and assisted living communities provide are often integral to the community, particularly in rural and small communities where they are the major employer in the area. This bill will help everyone be more responsive to the needs of residents and providers."

Both LeadingAge and AHCA/NCAL appreciate the leadership Reps. Duffy and Peterson have shown on this issue, and urge their House colleagues to join them in cosponsoring this important legislation.

## About LeadingAge

The mission of LeadingAge is to be the trusted voice of aging. Our 6,000+ members and partners include nonprofit organizations representing the entire field of aging services, 38 state associations, hundreds of businesses, consumer groups, foundations and research centers. LeadingAge is also part of the Global Ageing Network, whose membership spans 30 countries. LeadingAge is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization focused on education, advocacy and applied research.

## About AHCA/NCAL

The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) represents more than 13,500 nonprofit and proprietary skilled nursing centers, assisted living communities, sub-acute care centers and homes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. By delivering solutions for quality care, AHCA/NCAL aims to improve the lives of frail, elderly and individuals with disabilities who receive long term or post-acute care in our member facilities each day. For more information, please visit [www.ahca.org](http://www.ahca.org) or [www.ncal.org](http://www.ncal.org).

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