

# LONG TERM CARE COMMUNITY COALITION

*Advancing Quality, Dignity & Justice*

## MEMO IN SUPPORT

### A2232/S2754-A – An Act to Increase the Personal Needs Allowance for Residents in Nursing Homes & Residences for Victims of Domestic Violence

**DATE:** March 2017

**TITLE OF BILL:** An act to amend the social services law, in relation to personal needs allowances.

The Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) strongly supports this legislation which would provide a much-needed (and long-overdue) update to the modest personal funds allocated to nursing home residents every month. The bill would also provide for a similar, modest benefit for victims of domestic violence in residential programs.

The Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) is the monthly sum of money that residents who receive Medicaid (most long-term care residents) may retain from their personal income. Any income above this allowance is applied toward the cost of their care. Thus, the PNA is generally the only money that residents have for which they have any control or discretion. Any and all personal expenses, such as a telephone, buying a soda from a vending machine, sending a card to a grandchild, purchasing a book or hobby supplies, has to come out of the PNA and, when the PNA is exhausted, the resident has no more money until the next month's allotment is given to him or her.

The PNA for nursing home residents is \$50 a month, a figure which has not increased in many years. This bill would provide for an increase to \$75, still a very modest amount (especially in comparison to the increase in the cost of living over the years) and would provide for an annual adjustment tied to the Consumer Price Index so that the allowance keeps up with inflation.

LTCCC considers this increase important to resident quality of life and dignity, and urges support for the bill's provisions in relation to both nursing home residents and individuals in residences for victims of domestic violence.

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*The Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving care, quality of life and dignity for residents in nursing homes and other residential care settings. Since its incorporation in 1989, LTCCC has included among its members a broad range of civic, consumer and professional organizations from across New York State.*