

June 21, 2018

Honorable Joseph Vitale
569 Rahway Ave.
Woodbridge, NJ 07095

Re: S-2679 (Singer) – Establishes reciprocity requirements for out-of-State certified nurse aides and personal care assistants to practice in New Jersey.

Dear Chairman Vitale:

LeadingAge New Jersey (LANJ) is a non-profit trade association that represents communities and mission-based senior care facilities committed to providing high-quality aging services to seniors across New Jersey. On behalf of LANJ and its members, we are writing to respectfully request that **S-2679**, sponsored by Senator Robert Singer (LD-30), be posted on the next Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee agenda.

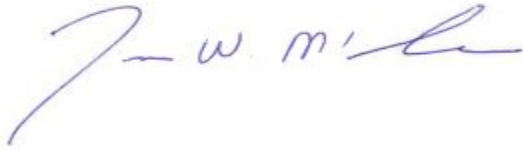
As you may already be aware, the baby boomer generation is aging rapidly and this growth is driving a corresponding demand for certified nurse aides (CNAs). Today, New Jersey nursing homes are working tirelessly to recruit and hire CNAs to fill approximately 1,800 open full- and part-time positions. Nationally, projections show that 95,000 additional CNAs will be needed by 2025 to help care for our aging population.

Unfortunately, our state is facing a serious workforce crisis and there simply aren't enough people to fill the much-needed positions. I am a licensed nursing home administrator and have first-hand experience directly involved with running nursing home operations. I can say without question that a CNA is one of the most important members of the health care team and plays an integral role in providing exceptional care and service. However, this physically and emotionally demanding work is not for everyone and therefore, the Legislature must focus on different, innovative ways to attract and address the workforce crisis.

New Jersey's neighboring states like New York and Pennsylvania offer a path to reciprocity for CNAs. **S-2679** establishes a reciprocity framework for out-of-State certified nurse aides (CNAs) and personal care assistants (PCAs) to practice in New Jersey. A seamless, accessible pathway for CNAs and PCAs certified in other states to relocate to New Jersey, obtain certification without having to re-complete and pay for the expensive training is a practical and realistic solution.

LANJ firmly believes continuing the dialogue will allow a clearer understanding of the existing nuances surrounding this complex issue and respectfully urge you to post **S-2679**. We remain strongly committed to working with you and your colleagues in the Legislature and thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at (609) 452-1121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. W. McCracken". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "J" being particularly large and stylized.

James W. McCracken
President/CEO
LeadingAge New Jersey