

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 125

Senators Runestad, Lucido, Theis, Nesbitt, Bizon and VanderWall offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to denounce the Governor's policy placing COVID-
2 19 positive residents with uninfected residents in nursing homes.

3 Whereas, Older adults are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19
4 and its most serious complications, including death. More than 87
5 percent of Michigan deaths from the disease have occurred among
6 Michiganders who were 60 years of age or older; and

7 Whereas, Nursing homes are high-risk environments for disease
8 transmission because residents live in close proximity to one
9 another, have underlying medical conditions, and are cared for by
10 staff who care for many other residents; and

11 Whereas, On April 15, 2020, Governor Whitmer issued Executive
12 Order 2020-50, requiring nursing homes with a census below 80

1 percent to create a dedicated unit for the care of COVID-19-
2 affected residents. This led to COVID-19-affected residents being
3 placed in the same facilities as residents without the disease,
4 increasing the risk of disease spread in an already vulnerable
5 population. The order also required facilities without dedicated
6 units to transfer COVID-19-affected residents to regional hubs,
7 which are dedicated exclusively to the care of COVID-19-affected
8 residents; and

9 Whereas, Particularly in the early days of the COVID-19
10 Pandemic, the Governor's policies placed COVID-19-affected
11 residents in nursing homes that were ill-prepared to both care for
12 them and prevent the spread of the disease to other residents.
13 Understaffing and a lack of testing and personal protective
14 equipment (PPE) compounded the enormous challenges facilities
15 already faced; and

16 Whereas, COVID-19 has ravaged Michigan nursing homes with more
17 than 1,200 deaths occurring in these settings, which makes up about
18 23 percent of all Michigan deaths from COVID-19. The Whitmer
19 administration has been slow to release nursing home data, and the
20 available data continues to be woefully inadequate, making it
21 difficult to see the full impact of these detrimental policies; and

22 Whereas, Despite evidence of the significant flaws in the
23 initial nursing home policies, Executive Order 2020-95, issued May
24 20, 2020, continues to put nursing home residents in harm's way by
25 placing COVID-19-affected residents in the same facilities as other
26 residents; and

27 Whereas, Ensuring the health and well-being of the state's
28 most vulnerable residents during the COVID-19 Pandemic is of the
29 utmost importance. The Whitmer administration must be held

1 accountable for these decisions. It is imperative that Michigan's
2 flawed nursing home policies are replaced by policies that will
3 protect nursing home residents today and in the future; now,
4 therefore, be it

5 Resolved by the Senate, That we denounce the Governor's policy
6 placing COVID-19 positive residents with uninfected residents in
7 nursing homes; and be it further

8 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
9 Governor.