

New Florida Senate Bill to Have Large Impact on Nursing Home Staffing if Passed



Republican Senator Ben Albritton recently filed a bill in the Florida Senate that seeks to change the landscape of care currently being received by residents of Florida's long-term care and skilled nursing facilities. SB 804 will call for a shift in the nursing home staff, which would lessen the requirements for certified nursing assistants (CNAs) in an age where there is currently a statewide nursing home staff shortage. The bill would seek to replace these individuals with non-medical staff who would fill the roles of CNAs each day, and cut the number of hours required for skilled nursing day per day from 3.6 hours down to only 1 hour each day. At a CNA wage of only about \$10-11 per hour, though, it may even prove difficult to find untrained individuals willing to work in these roles when they would be able to find better paying jobs elsewhere and often with better benefits. Many of the CNAs currently employed only remain in their positions due to their sense of duty and obligation to their profession, and desire to ensure that the residents are being well cared for. Many CNAs have even expressed concern over the potential passing of this bill, stating that they would worry for their patient's lives should this pass. Because of this, the CNAs of the state of Florida have begun to rally against the passing of this bill.

If passed, this bill would induce a large shift in the level of care that nursing home residents receive on a daily basis. These residents commonly suffer from many different disabilities and require the assistance of nursing home staff to not only conduct daily activities of living, but also to assist in their medical care through the administration of medications and monitoring for side effects as well as the general safety and well being of the residents. While certain individuals may be able to be trained to conduct some of the daily activities that certified nurses perform, they would not have the years of schooling and clinical experience the nurses are required to achieve as part of their training and would lack some of the key knowledge required to ensure that the residents are being well taken cared for, and having all their medical needs met appropriately. The solution to this problem is not to try to shift the responsibilities over to untrained staff members. Instead, certified nurses should be provided with adequate compensation to attract more individuals within the field and to allow them to be able to work in this environment and take care of patients while also being able to provide for their families at home.

Click here to read the full article: <https://www.wmfe.org/nursing-assistants-at-long-term-care-facilities-in-central-florida-rally-against-senate-bill-that-could-replace-them-with-untrained-workers/192610>