

## Memo in Support

### S.1663 (Grisanti)/A.4467 (Gottfried)

*AN ACT to amend the social services law in relation to the adult care facilities training program.*

The Schuyler Center is a 141-year-old statewide nonprofit, policy analysis and advocacy organization working to shape policies that improve health, welfare and human services in New York State. The Schuyler Center strongly supports S.1663/A.4467, which would establish an adult care facility direct care staff training program.

Adult care facilities house many people who are elderly, have physical disabilities, or have mental or psychological disabilities. Direct care workers provide residents of these facilities with many of the day to day services and assistance they need to remain healthy and safe. However, there is no uniform course of training required for direct care staff to make sure that they are equipped to provide these essential services. While some facilities provide regular in-service trainings and programs, others offer little or no training. A lack of basic training can result in a dangerous environment for residents and workers.

To address this problem, this bill:

**Directs the Department of Health to Establish a Workgroup to Develop a Uniform Curriculum and Best Practices for Direct Care Staff in Adult Care Facilities.** The bill requires the Department to establish a workgroup to develop a curriculum for a uniform training program for direct care staff. The bill specifies that the curriculum must: (a) include at least 40 hours of instruction divided between classroom and hands-on learning; (b) include an additional eight hours of training in medication management and administration; and (c) promote the values of resident autonomy and dignity.

As the population ages, adult care facilities have become an increasingly popular alternative to nursing home care. This bill calls for less than half the minimum training hours required for nursing home aids. Basic and uniform training standards for direct care staff are critical to ensuring resident safety and dignity.

**Requires Direct Care Staff in Adult Care Facilities to Complete the Training Program.** The bill would amend the Social Services Law to require all adult care facility direct care staff to complete a training curriculum and pass a written and a practical exam before being allowed to perform direct care services without supervision. For new staff members, training would begin as soon as an individual is hired for a direct care position. Existing staff will have one year to complete the training requirements.

A lack of training often directly contributes to patterns of error that endanger the health and safety of residents. A basic training program would help prevent errors, help keep residents and staff safe, and give staff members tools to provide high quality services.

*June 17, 2013*