

Date, 2024

Dear Chairman Guthrie and Ranking Member Eshoo:

The Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals strongly urges you to **OPPOSE H.R. 3227 and H.R. 8244**. ASCIP is a not-for-profit incorporated association whose mission is to optimize the health and wellness of individuals with spinal cord injury or disorder (SCI/D) through advanced interdisciplinary education, professional development and scientific research.

These bills propose to weaken training requirements for nursing home staff, jeopardizing the safety of our nation's 1.2 million residents – many with complex needs like spinal cord injuries. While staffing shortages are a pressing issue, sacrificing training is not the answer. Instead, let's focus on investing in our nursing homes by improving wages, benefits, and career advancement opportunities to attract and retain qualified staff.

Weakening the System, Not Fixing It

H.R. 3227 and H.R. 8244 propose allowing nursing homes with violation citations to run their own training programs. This **lacks accountability** and opens the door for facilities with a history of neglect or abuse to train staff.

The current system, with the Secretary's discretion to waive violations on a case-by-case basis, ensures a responsible approach. This allows for flexibility while safeguarding resident well-being. **H.R. 8244's automatic waiver eliminates this vital oversight.**

Examples of Unacceptable Exceptions

Imagine a nursing home cited for:

- **Falsifying records**
- **Failing to report resident abuse**
- **Retaliating against whistleblowers**

These are **egregious violations** that undermine trust and threaten resident safety. Yet, under H.R. 8244, such facilities could train staff with minimal oversight.

A Call to Action

Our nation's nursing homes face a staffing crisis, but the answer isn't compromising resident safety. **Invest in our workforce, raise standards, and prioritize the well-being of our most vulnerable citizens.**

We urge you to reject H.R. 3227 and H.R. 8244 and work towards solutions that strengthen, not weaken, the nursing home system.