

## **COVID-19 Nursing Home Protection Act (S.333)**

**Led by Senators Casey, Warnock, Whitehouse, Blumenthal and Booker**

### **Why do we need the COVID-19 Nursing Home Protection Act?**

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected residents and workers in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. Over [1.3 million](#) residents and workers in long-term care facilities have been infected with COVID-19 and more than [170,000](#) have died, accounting for approximately [35 percent](#) of COVID-19 deaths nationwide. The effects of the pandemic have been most devastating in communities of color, where reports have found that facilities serving significant numbers of Black and Hispanic residents were [twice as likely to have COVID-19](#) infections. Nevertheless, thus far, the federal government has not collected or reported data related to infections and deaths in facilities based on race, ethnicity or preferred language.

To protect residents and workers, some States are implementing innovative strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes. States are utilizing “strike” or “surge” teams to ensure a sufficient number of aides, nurses and other providers are available to care for residents. Such teams also help manage COVID-19 outbreaks within a facility, particularly as vaccinations proceed in these settings. Since August, approximately [20 percent](#) of nursing homes have reported each week that they do not have a sufficient workforce to care for residents. President Biden has called for the implementation of strike teams in his [American Rescue Plan](#) to help address these persistent shortages as well as the collection and dissemination of data on suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths by race, ethnicity and preferred language.

Funding is also needed to provide real-time technical assistance to facilities on infection control practices and to prevent future outbreaks. Funding for strike teams and technical support is essential to ensure that States and nursing homes have the resources needed to care for residents and support workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **What would the COVID-19 Nursing Home Protection Act do?**

- The bill would provide \$750 million in funding to States, for purposes of establishing and implementing strike teams.
- The bill would guarantee that \$210 million is available to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to contract with quality improvement organizations to provide essential infection control assistance to nursing homes.
- The bill would also require the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services to collect and post on Nursing Home Compare demographic data on COVID-19 cases and deaths, including information on age, race, ethnicity and preferred language.

**Supporters:** American Health Care Association, Pennsylvania Health Care Association, Alzheimer’s Association, Alzheimer’s Impact Movement, CARIE, LeadingAge, American Health Quality Association

**Cosponsors:** Senators Cantwell, Menendez, Shaheen, Smith, Klobuchar, Duckworth, Van Hollen, Brown, Cortez Masto, Reed, Hassan, Hirono, Gillibrand