

September 22, 2009

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 781 (Leno) – Urge your signature

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

On behalf of California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform (CANHR), I strongly urge you to sign SB 781 (Leno), an important bill to ensure that residents of Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs) are given information about their rights when they are being evicted from their homes. The bill has received unanimous support from both the Assembly and Senate.

Evictions have long been a pervasive problem for RCFE residents. The problem has grown in recent years as the number of RCFEs has grown to nearly 8,000 statewide while the Department of Social Services' Community Care Licensing Division has reduced its regular facility inspections to only once every five years. RCFE residents do have procedural protections to prevent dangerous unplanned evictions; however, they often receive no information about these protections when they are removed from their homes.

SB 781 requires RCFEs that seek to evict a resident provide written notice that includes basic information about the resident's right to challenge the eviction. Among the information that must be provided is the date of the eviction, resources available to assist the resident in finding new housing, and the right to an administrative appeal or court hearing to contest the proposed eviction.

SB 781 is a simple measure to empower vulnerable RCFE residents by informing them of their legal rights before they are forced to leave their homes. With such information, long-standing resident protections will be much more meaningful and residents will be less susceptible to inappropriate or illegal evictions.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you and your administration to implement this valuable legislation.

Sincerely,

Patricia McGinnis
Executive Director