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## **LETTER: Nursing homes need more state funding**

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Gov. Tom Wolf's budget proposal for Pennsylvania's nursing homes fails to meet the ever-increasing health-care needs of the people we care for. It would make the fifth year of flat funding for these health care providers, who serve our neighbors, our friends and our families.

We are concerned about the health and well-being of our residents, and our ignoring the fiscal realities of providing complex health-care services will eventually have an impact on the level of care we are able to provide. The funding that supports resident care has not kept pace with the changing landscape of nursing home care.

Highly skilled medical care is required for a significant portion of the loved ones staying in nursing homes and nursing homes. The National Survey of Residential Care Facilities indicates 50 percent of senior living residents have three or more chronic conditions, while 42 percent have Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. Those statistics, coupled with the knowledge that we have 81,000 elderly and disabled residents in Pennsylvania, provide perspective as to why our nursing homes require a budget increase.

A state increase of 2.8 percent will leverage more than \$50 million in federal funding and double the investment's impact. The state and federal dollars will help address the growing need for skilled medical care. That's why I recently went to Harrisburg to ask our state legislators to take the lead in supporting our seniors' health-care needs by increasing the funding for care in nursing homes.

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