

Testimony of Aileen Klein  
132 Winding Rose Drive  
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Chair Pendergrass and Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk,

My name is Aileen Klein, and I am here today in support of HB 416 because of my mother, who in 2013 began living in a Montgomery County assisted living facility, and in 2017, she was transferred to their memory care floor. We are very fortunate that she is able to afford an excellent facility, where we pay over \$10,000 per month for specialized care.

People with dementia need a great deal of care and protection due to their level of mental impairment which can vary from day to day, or even hour to hour. Sometimes they may seem lucid and a minute later, confused and disoriented.

My mother has forgotten how to do many things, including answering her phone. The ringing sound is now meaningless to her. Similarly, the pendant alarm that she wore when she first arrived at the assisted living facility is no longer useful. As a result, if she forgets she needs help going to the bathroom at night and gets out of bed and falls, she has no means of getting help. As we age, even our voices become weaker, so when she cries out, no one is able to hear. This could result in painful hours on the floor for her, unattended.

I chose to move my mom into an assisted living facility that had both assisted living and memory care, because they have many more options for everyday interaction and activities, as compared to a facility with solely memory care. My mom loves Jeopardy, word games, and even discussion groups with assisted living facility residents. Some days she can only listen; many times, she can participate.

The cost of memory care is extraordinary. Yet the requirements for memory care units are more limited, as neither the legislature nor the Health Department have required any specific differences for memory care units within assisted living facilities.

In closing, I urge that you to support HB 416, so we can get an update to assisted living facility regulations, and one that ensures there are more special regulations for memory care residents.