



2022 South Dakota Legislature  
**House Concurrent Resolution**  
**6012**  
**ENROLLED**

AN ACT

**A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Urging the development of options for ensuring continued visitation of patients and residents in nursing facilities and assisted living centers.**

WHEREAS, each day, the talented and dedicated people who staff South Dakota nursing facilities and assisted living centers work tirelessly to ensure that the patients and residents entrusted to them receive the best possible care; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the day-to-day challenges of operating nursing facilities and assisted living centers became exponentially increased by the need to prepare for and address the high rates of infection, morbidity, and mortality being seen in like settings across the country; and

WHEREAS, the vulnerable nature of their patients and residents, combined with the inherent risks of congregate living in a healthcare setting, caused the imposition of aggressive measures to limit exposure to COVID-19 and the spread of COVID-19 within each facility and center; and

WHEREAS, these aggressive measures included restricting virtually all in-person visitation and interaction with friends, family, and non-essential healthcare personnel; and

WHEREAS, the resulting physical separation took an immeasurable emotional and physical toll on patients and residents, as well as on their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, for many patients and residents, the social isolation led to increases in depression, anxiety, and distress; and

WHEREAS, for patients and residents with cognitive impairments or other disabilities, the restrictions were also confusing and upsetting; and

WHEREAS, the institutional efforts to mitigate the risk of infection among patients and residents resulted in an unintentional but seriously detrimental violation of the right to receive visitors at the time of the patient's or resident's own choosing:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Seventh Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the Senate concurring therein, that while safeguarding the health and wellbeing of this state's vulnerable elderly population is a laudable goal and not easily achievable during a pandemic, the measures undertaken in pursuit of that goal should strive to minimize sequestration of our elderly family members, friends, and neighbors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that nursing facilities and assisted living centers be urged to work collectively for the development and implementation of options that safeguard the health and well-being of their patients and residents, while recognizing that quality of life is greatly dependent on regular and frequent personal interactions that promote physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the members of the South Dakota congressional delegation be urged to join with their counterparts from the other states to ensure that any federal statutes, regulations, guidance, and orders addressing the health and well-being of patients and residents, in nursing facilities and assisted living centers, during a pandemic, incorporate ongoing visitation and personal interactions, and support the efforts of the facilities and centers to provide such opportunities to patients, residents, and their loves ones.

Adopted by the House of Representatives,  
Concurred in by the Senate,

February 25, 2022  
March 2, 2022

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Spencer Gosch  
Speaker of the House

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Patricia Miller  
Chief Clerk

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Larry Rhoden  
President of the Senate

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Kay Johnson  
Secretary of the Senate