## learing airs charges of nursing home mistreatment

A litany of complaints about nursing home abuses were placed before a public hearing conducted by a House Democrat-ic Task Force meeting last month at Farmington Hills City 13411

month at Farmington Hills City
Talk force member Kwams
(Kippatrick, D-Detroit, conducted
the hearing, joined by Nancy
Quarles, D-Southfield, and
Andrew Raczkowski, R-Farmington Hills.

The audience, which filled the
city council chambers, backed up
their complaints with photographs showing sores, bruises
and other evidence of neglect.

Doris Austenberry said that
her mother suffered a broken hip
and gangrene in her leg which
sent her to the hospital. A fow
days later, she died. She blamed
the lobbying of the nursing home

industry and their contributions to elected officials for the failure to bring about improvements. Her sister is now facing similar neglect. Kilpatrick said he watched his

own grandmother and great-grandmother die miserably in

"My mother, a U.S. congress-woman, couldn't get adequate care for her mother," Kilpatrick

care for her mother, Euparica added.
Phyllis Moga said she tried to complain about how her mother was being mistreated but could get no response from the state of Michigan for three months. She said the nursing home industry has enough money but rouses to put it into staffing.
Blatant corporate greed needs to be stopped," she said. "Owners of nursing homes should be

made to live in the homes."

O.C. Stovens called for improvements in staffing levels. Monica Jackson said her husband was constantly abused uning the last seven years in two homes, including being drugged, starved and not tolleted regularly. Virginia Brown worked in a nursing home where a new administrator didn't want the staff to interact with residents. That led to the resignation of Turnsing care professionals.

band was constantly abused during the last seven years in two homes, including being drugged, starved and not toileted regularly. Virginia Brown worked in a nursing home where a new administrator didn't want the ystaff to interact with residents. That led to the resignation of 17 nursing care professionals. Shirley Clark said her father had to be taken to the hospital because the nursing home home home tour days without a dressing change, she told the panel. Ellen Ann Fox said she was fired by a nursing home because she refused to falsify records. She said the placement process by hospitals and courts often involve conflicts of interest.

Ruth Fuller had a grandmothing the professionals, and courts of the professionals, are determining what treatments given. To under serious present and the bing desend, and the bing desend, and the said that the hospitals of the professionals, are determining what treatments given. To under serious present and the professionals, and the bing idea of the bing desend, and the professionals, are determining what treatments given. To under serious present and the professionals, are determining what treatments given. To under serious present and the bing desend, and the bing desender of the bing dese

er die of gangrene when the nursing home staff wouldn't change her dressings. She said staff reported that insurance companies, not the professionals, are determining what treatment is riven.

properly use medication pro-scribed by doctors," Watkins

Dennis Cavanagh said more laws are needed "but we need

laws are needed but we need enforcement of present laws." Mike Connor, spokesman for Quality Care in Nursing Homes, called for the consumer to be represented in discussions about legislation dealing with nursing

homes.

"The industry has been dominating the issue," he said, chinging the industry is blocking improvements in the inspection process. "We should listen more to relatives of patients about neglect.

to relatives of patients about neglect.

He said claims that homes don't have adequate funding are false. He noted that state funding increased from \$400 million to \$1.2 billion in recent years. He called for improved doctor care in nursing homes and more attention to safety issues such as dangerous bed rails. He was joined by Lydia Rizzo of the Campaign for Quality Care, who called for relatives of nursing home patients to organize to win improvements. She said win improvements. She said the same progress because of its strength of numbers. She criticized the state enforcement

agency, the Department of Consumer and Industry Services, as being too lax. "We need more than sympathy," she said. "We need action."

J.K. Coulter said his mother was moved to a hospital twice without any clothes on.

"She was dropped from the bed and stabbed in hor feet," he added.

.P. Sanchez, a nursing home worker, agreed with the statements made by others.

"At dianortime, I have seen a lot of people just sitting there without food in front of them," she added. "Nurses are overwhelmed, too."

The hearing was arranged by former Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi who told the audience that the influence of special interest contributions to candidates for office, in this case the nursing home industry, is a big factor in there being no progress in making the necessary improvements. He called on candidates for offlice, and furnices (PAC) contributions.

Kilpatrick and Quarles said the turnout was the best the task force has seen since it began holding the hearings.

Call Michigan Campaign for Quality Care at 800-288-6923.



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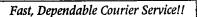
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