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**RESTORE CRITICAL SERVICES TO NURSING HOME PATIENTS**  
***Bill will directly pay for oxygen, transportation, wheelchairs for patients***

Rep. Kenny Yuko introduced a bill to rectify a change in state law that caused some nursing home patients to be denied critical services and hurt small business providers who deliver these needed services.

In an unintended consequence, a change in the way the state reimburses nursing homes led to the loss of services and transportation to nursing home patients who are dependent on oxygen, dialysis treatment, custom wheel chairs and parts, and therapy treatment. The change was made in a last minute amendment to the state budget bill in 2009.

The amendment gave nursing homes \$3.91 per patient, per day, without taking into account the needs of different patients. By disconnecting the funds to the patient and the patient needs, some of the patients who are dependent on oxygen, dialysis treatment, and custom chairs are now unable to access services that have long been provided to them.

“My bill will restore these services and keep the providers in business,” said Yuko. “I fully recognize the intent was to give the money to the nursing homes to provide these services but that is not what happened. Instead we have nursing home patients who can not get transportation, are unable to get their wheel chairs repaired due to the expense, and this is frankly not acceptable.”

To offset any additional costs to the state by returning to direct service reimbursement for patient services, the legislation provides nursing facilities funding to buy certain prescription drugs, not covered by Medicare Part D, that were being purchases by the state. This funding, along with the federal match, should replace losses.

Supporting the bill at a press conference held today at St. Augustine Health Campus, 7891 Detroit Ave, Cleveland, were nursing home patients, advocates for patients, providers of equipment and services, and nursing home administrators.

“I believe this is a win-win situation for us. We can restore the critical services for nursing home patients, we can continue to employ people in the support and provider industries, and we can do this without costing Ohio any additional funds,” Yuko said.