



T E N N E S S E E H E A L T H C A R E
A S S O C I A T I O N

November 9, 2005

The Honorable John B. Larson
U. S. House of Representatives
1005 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0701

Dear Congressman Larson:

On behalf of the Tennessee Health Care Association (THCA), I am writing in support of the "Nursing Home Fire Safety Act of 2005" legislation you will soon introduce.

In Tennessee we had a tragic fire in Nashville in September 2003 which claimed the lives of 15 elderly and disabled patients. The nursing home industry responded immediately and supported the requirement for all nursing facilities to be equipped with sprinklers. THCA worked with the Tennessee legislature in the spring of 2004 and passed comprehensive bills requiring sprinklers and smoke detectors (on a more immediate basis) in all facilities not previously sprinklered. Currently less than 25 of our 350 nursing homes are not sprinklered and those are either in the process or being replaced.

Our tragic experience highlighted the need to do everything possible to protect the safety of those who cannot protect themselves. Thank you for introducing this bill, and if I can be of any service to you in support of the bill please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Cole
Executive Director

/kb