

**Home Care Alliance of MA Testimony**  
**Joint Committee on Elder Affairs**  
**04/14/2025**  
**10:00am State House Room A-1**  
**Re: H.789/S.740 Hearing**

My name is Jake Krilovich and I'm the Executive Director for the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts (HCA). I want to thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony on H.789/S.740, *An Act to Improve Massachusetts Home Care*, which would create a licensure system for non-medical home care services. I would like to thank and express our appreciation for Chairs Patricia Jehlen and Thomas Stanley for their leadership on this issue.

HCA has been advocating for licensure for over 15 years! It's not often you have an industry coming to this body, urging it to be regulated. We believe in this initiative so deeply that we created our own accreditation standards in lieu of State Licensure several years ago. This accreditation holds our members to a higher standard so that consumers can be certain they are receiving the best care possible and they largely served as the basis for the bill before the committee today.

As you will hear many times, home care services are a vital and growing part of the health care delivery system. They are essential/cost-effective non-medical, companion and homemaking services that allow people to age safely in the comfort of their home and delay their need for higher-acute, higher-cost facility settings.

HCA gets at least 2 inquiries a week from people looking to open an agency in Massachusetts. And as me and my staff often inform these prospective business owners – and I've said to many of you on this committee – in many respects, it's easier to open a home care agency, than a pizza shop in the Commonwealth. Currently, you simply file with the Secretary of State's office as a business and adhere to one or two Department of Public Health (DPH) requirements when sending workers into an older adult's home – and you can operate. And we remain one of only 4 states without a licensure system for home care services.

We believe that agencies should be held to a baseline set of standards that would protect consumers and the workforce. This bill's framework does just that, without overburdening providers and inadvertently increasing the cost of private pay home care which would drive consumers to seek care in the underground marketplace.

This bill would direct the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to establish a licensure system that protect consumers by ensuring adequate background checks, minimum standards in consumer service plans, training and competency requirements, liability and workers compensation insurance minimums, maintenance of payroll process, and a consumer complaint process. This bill would not only license home care agencies, but it would license any entity or person who advertises themselves as providing home care services.

In addition, the bill requires coordination between DPH, the Department of Aging and Independence and MassHealth to ensure that there is no duplication between this licensure

system, and home health licensure – which passed and was enacted into law in 2017 – but has yet to be implemented.

It is imperative that we act now to establish these baseline standards so that we can best protect workers, consumers, and level the playing field among operators. Today, we have no idea how many non-medical home care providers there are in Massachusetts. If you ask any of our provider members, they can give you an example of someone working in the shadows skirting these standards. Whether it's by failing to adhere to wage and labor laws, not carrying liability insurance, or not conducting background checks on workers. All things you would assume would be required of a provider or worker caring for people in their homes.

This exposes residents of the Commonwealth, it exposes our industry and exposes this legislature to a tragedy that occurs in the home and may have been prevented by licensure. We have already seen such tragedies – in January a home health aide was stabbed 30 times by their patient in East Boston. Two years ago – a home health nurse was murdered in Connecticut. I'm not suggesting that licensure will prevent these tragedies from ever occurring again – but it is a critical step forward to doing everything we can to protect our patients and our workforce.

HCA, along with our members plead with the committee to vote this bill favorably and expedite it through the legislative process. HCA wants to say thank you again to the committee for giving me this opportunity to speak on this important legislation and issue.