

In Support of SB 303

Senator Alicia Straub - Dist. 33

March 26, 2021

Chairman Hildebrand and Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee Members:

Thank you for your time and consideration of SB 303. I am not here to share a personal story...I stand before you today to advocate for the very people that I represent. We are a government by and for the people. The past year has been a difficult one for most, but no population has been as adversely affected by this more than our elderly and long term care patient population. Sadly, I know far too many that have been isolated and denied their basic god given individual liberties. We have many here today in support of SB 303, but also had to turn down many who wanted to share their stories in person due to the limited time we have been allowed for this hearing. If you have not already, I urge you to please read their testimony posted on the committee page.

When considering visitation policies for nursing home and long term care facilities, we must take into consideration that family members and friends are not "just visitors". They are essential care givers, communicators, and primary advocates for the resident/patient. Visitors are very often the only oversight concerning the resident's/patient's quality of care.

Many families with loved ones in care homes have been denied the basic right of face to face in-person visits. These same family members are most likely the most vigilant in protecting their loved ones from exposure. There is absolutely no reason not to allow visitors for these resident's/patient's that follow the very same precautions that the care facility staff must follow.

We as Senators have been trusted with the duty of upholding the constitution, and protecting those freedoms extended to us all within it. I kindly ask for your support of SB 303.

Respectfully,



Senator, Alicia D. Straub – Dist. 33

P.S.

Please put yourself in the position of these families....this denial of basic freedom has directly affected someone that sat in your position not all that long ago; my predecessor the Honorable Senator Larry Salmans and his family who are here today.

"First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."

~ Martin Niemöller

Martin Niemöller, a Lutheran pastor from Germany, wrote this in a poem that first became popular in the 1950s. He also made speeches with similar language. The pastor had started out as an anti-Communist supporter of Adolf Hitler but later opposed the Nazis. He spent several years in concentration camps during the Holocaust.