

Tallahassee Democrat

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Letters to the Editor: Stand up for seniors in long-term care

Building upon the national observance of Long-Term Care Residents' Rights Week, Florida is stepping up to the plate for the fifth year in a row by proclaiming October Residents' Rights Month.

This year's theme, "Our Two Cents Is No Small Change," encourages residents to share their opinions and speak up about their quality of life and care in nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, and adult family-care homes. It also encourages facilities to value their residents' perspectives in order to provide excellence in caregiving.

As Florida celebrates residents' rights, I encourage community members to volunteer in a long-term care facility or inquire about becoming a long-term care ombudsman. These special volunteers are the driving force behind Residents' Rights Month, and they carry the spirit of the occasion throughout the year, advocating for some of Florida's elders by personally responding to their concerns and helping to resolve them. The program can be reached by calling toll free 1-888-831-0404.

Let us all work to ensure that the voices of long-term-care residents do not go unheard and demonstrate that they have not been forgotten. Let us treat them with the respect they deserve and give back to them at least a portion of what they have given to us throughout their lives.

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