



# COMMISSIONERS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### *Commissioners Proclaim Long-term Care Residents' Rights Month*

**Cumberland County, PA** – The Board of Commissioners proclaimed October as Long-term Care Residents' Rights Month in Cumberland County at their public meeting today. This is an annual nationwide event designated by the National Consumer Voice and is celebrated in October to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, sub-acute units, assisted living, and personal care homes. It is a time for celebration and recognition offering an opportunity for every facility to focus on and celebrate awareness of dignity, respect and the value of each individual resident. The theme for 2016 is *"My Vote Matters"* highlighting residents' rights to vote and engage in the political process. Residents who receive long-term care services and support retain their voting rights no matter where they live or what type of care they receive.

During the month of October, representatives from the Ombudsmen and Pennsylvania Empowered Expert Residents (PEER) Programs will be visiting long-term care facilities throughout Cumberland County to present Residents' Rights trainings. This service is provided by the County's Office of Aging & Community Services and the Pennsylvania Department of Aging. The purpose of the training is to educate residents about Choice, Accountability, Rights, and Empowerment. Choice of a long-term care setting and day-to-day decisions; Accountability of facilities and regulators to residents; Rights respected and care directed by residents; and Empowering residents, their families, advocates and staff are the focus of the training.

The Nursing Home Reform Law passed in 1987 guarantees nursing home residents their individual rights, including but not limited to, individualized care, respect, dignity, the right to visitation, the right to privacy, the right to complain, and the right to make independent choices. Residents' Rights Month raises awareness about these rights and pays tribute to the unique contributions of long-term residents. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the Ombudsman Program is comprised of volunteers and staff trained to advocate for consumers.

For more information about Residents' Rights Month or the Ombudsman and PEER Programs, please contact the Cumberland County Office of Aging & Community Services at 717-240-6110 or 1-888-697-0371 ext. 6110.

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