



**SENATOR CHARLES SCHWERTNER, MD**  
SENATE DISTRICT 5

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Schwertner Works to Protect Vulnerable Texans from Abuse**

*Senate Health & Human Services Chair unveils legislative package to protect seniors and the disabled from abuse and neglect in nursing homes and other care settings.*

**AUSTIN, TX** -- Today, Senator Charles Schwertner, MD (R-Georgetown) filed a slate of legislative proposals designed to increase the quality of care standards for seniors and other vulnerable Texans living in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

"Texas needs to send a clear and unambiguous message that we're serious about protecting our most vulnerable citizens from abuse and neglect," said Schwertner. "Whether it's children in foster care, individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities living in long term care facilities, or our parents and grandparents residing in nursing homes, our state needs to do a much better job of protecting those who cannot protect themselves."

In 2014, the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission found that the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) takes few enforcement actions on violations of long term care facilities such as nursing homes, even on serious and repeat offenses. However, when the DADS Sunset bill (SB 204, 84R) failed to pass out of the Texas House last session, many of the Sunset Commission's proposals to strengthen enforcement failed to pass as well.

**SB 932 (Long Term Care Oversight and Protection)** -- eliminates so-called "right to correct" plans for long-term care facilities (such as nursing homes, assisted living centers, and intermediate care facilities) found to exhibit chronic, substandard quality of care violations. SB 932 also directs HHSC to develop progressive sanctions based on the scope and severity of violations, and increases financial penalties for the most serious violations.

**SB 933 (Home Health Oversight and Protection)** -- eliminates so-called "right to correct" plans for Home and Community Services Agencies (HCSSAs) found to exhibit chronic, substandard quality of care violations. SB 933 also directs HHSC to develop progressive sanctions based on the scope and severity of violations, and increases financial penalties for the most serious violations.

**SB 934 (Nursing Facility Liability Insurance)** -- requires all nursing facilities in Texas to carry professional liability insurance coverage of \$300,000 per occurrence and \$1 million in aggregate. This liability policy would hold nursing homes financially responsible and allow families to recover damages when a loved one is abused or dies as a result of negligent care.

A medical doctor by training, Dr. Schwertner currently serves as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. Schwertner is currently serving his third term as the senator for Senate District 5, a ten-county region of central and east Texas.

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