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### **Statement from the Health Care Council of Illinois about the Final Report from the Governor's Nursing Home Safety Task Force**

(SPRINGFIELD) – On behalf of the 80,000 nursing home professionals and caregivers serving more than 65,000 residents in the 650 Illinois nursing homes we represent, the Health Care Council of Illinois (HCCI) applauds the efforts of Governor Quinn's Nursing Home Safety Task Force.

Last fall, HCCI formed its own internal work group to develop and present recommendations to the Task Force for improving services for individuals with serious mental illness in long term care facilities. The Task Force did in fact accept a great number of those recommendations.

In many respects, however, the recommendations that HCCI put forth went further than the Task Force's. For example, HCCI called for expanded staff training requirements, including enhanced continuing education credits. HCCI also called for standardizing admission and discharge criteria, stepping up ongoing psychiatric assessments, and developing discharge plans for each resident aimed at successfully moving toward more independent living. These regulatory changes, along with those accepted by the Task Force, will be rolled out this week by HCCI as an amendment to HB 5218 sponsored by Representative Lou Lang.

We also applaud the Task Force for accepting HCCI's recommendation that work groups be established to flesh out the details of specific proposals. We are encouraged that these work groups will include members of the long term care profession.

"Although we have reservations about some of the proposals contained within its Final Report, HCCI looks forward to a full partnership with the Governor's Task Force in developing policies that will ensure the safety and security of all nursing home residents," said Executive Director Pat Comstock.

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*The Health Care Council of Illinois (HCCI) is a professional association of more than 650 nursing facilities committed to quality residential health care in Illinois through a productive and responsible partnership between the private and public sectors. HCCI represents more than 80,000 nursing home professionals serving more than 65,000 residents.*