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**Representative Willhite and Senator Audrey Gibson
Join to Strengthen Protections for Residents in Nursing
Homes**

Tallahassee, Fla. – Florida House Representative Matt Willhite (D-Wellington) joins State Senator Audrey Gibson (D-Jacksonville) in strengthening protections for residents living in nursing home facilities. [HB 1361](#) and [SB 1734](#) will ensure communication between a resident’s personal physician, whom they have the right to keep even as a nursing home resident, the resident’s power of attorney and the medical director of the nursing home facility by requiring the director to consult with a resident’s personal physician and power of attorney before prescribing medication in conflict to the resident’s personal physician.

Representative Willhite issued the following statement:

“When signed into law this bill will create a better line of communication and a set of standards between a resident of a nursing home, their doctor, and their power of attorney. When we talk about health care, our primary obligation must always be the patient. By putting in place this set of standards, the patient will receive care that is more accurate.”

Senator Audrey Gibson issued the following statement:

“Getting a pharmacy bill in the mail is not the way a nursing home residents’ family and Power of Attorney should find out about new medication being administered to their loved one, and lab work should not be diverted from the residents’ physician who ordered the lab work.” said Senator Gibson. “SB 1734/HB 1361 will ensure safety and important health outcomes for residents’ who cannot speak for themselves. Florida’s percentage of senior population over 65 is the second highest in the country, many may end up in nursing homes. They deserve to be properly cared for.”

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