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2020-21 President

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November 24, 2020

The Honorable Valerie Vainieri Huttle
Assembly Committee on Senior Services
New Jersey Assembly
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

Letter Sent Via Email to: AKaser@njleg.org

RE: Assembly Bill 4855

Dear Chairperson Huttle and Committee Members:

ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, founded in 1894, is a global society advancing human well-being through sustainable technology for the built environment. The Society and its more than 55,000 members focus on building systems, energy efficiency, indoor air quality, refrigeration and sustainability. Through research, standards writing, publishing, certification and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's built environment today.

We are writing to you regarding Assembly Bill 4855, "*Statewide plan for infection control and prevention infrastructure improvements in nursing homes*". We appreciate the introduction of this legislation as it aptly recognizes that many coronavirus hot spots have been in nursing homes. The vulnerable populations in these facilities need protection and care.

To further improve the bill, we suggest that ASHRAE's Guidance for Residential Care Facilities be incorporated into the bill's requirements regarding heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration systems in nursing homes. This guidance, newly updated as of November 17, includes recommendations specific to nursing homes and other types of care facilities, as well as HVAC and maintenance solutions. The guidance can be found at <https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-residential-healthcare-c19-guidance.pdf>. The ASHRAE guidance can be a useful tool for assisting facility managers and others in complying with the nursing home infection control and prevention infrastructure assessment required by this bill.

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The guidance referenced above was developed by ASHRAE's Epidemic Task Force, which was formed in March 2020 to help deploy technical resources to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and possible future epidemics as it relates to the effects of HVAC systems on disease transmission. Incorporating ASHRAE's Epidemic Task Force technical guidance into legislation will support targeted investments to minimize viral transmission risks and improve the health of residents. Additional guidance, answers to frequently asked questions, and other resources on the coronavirus and the built environment can be found at www.ashrae.org/covid19.

Again, we appreciate the attention to heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration systems in this bill, and suggest that ASHRAE guidance be included as well. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff email GovAffairs@ashrae.org. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter and for working to ensure the health and well-being of building occupants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles E. Gullidge III, PE". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Charles E. Gullidge III, P.E., FASHRAE, HBDP, LEED AP
2020-21 ASHRAE President

cc: The Honorable Dan Benson
The Honorable Nick Chiaravalloti
New Jersey Senate Committee on Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens