

Health & Human Services Committee

Hi, I'm Lise Kennedy.

I was very offended by Joe Perello's disrespect last week towards Star Hesse and the other seniors, including myself, who attend these meetings regularly. Joe has stated that his walks down the hall of the ACC and chats with the Administrator leave him absolutely certain that "there's nothing wrong with the quality of care at the ACC," so that I and the others who come here must be lying. I say that he's the liar.

I worked at Public Health for 25 years until I retired in 2018, the year that the ACC got their 5 star rating. The ACC was a peripheral part of my work life. I was a student nurse at the old Infirmary, and I worked at the ACC as an RN for one New Year's Day once as a volunteer. Of course I've visited people there, as many of us have over the years, and had meetings and trainings there.

I talk to a lot of people, including people who currently work at the ACC. This year, I've been walking around as I did in 2020 wearing a big sign which says, "Save the ACC, sign the Petition," and a lot of people come up to me and talk about their experiences at the ACC. I've heard that there are some people who wanted to talk to their legislators about the ACC but don't even get their calls returned. I also speak often with members of the Family Council, participate in social media, and read several newspapers as well as publications from the Long Term Care Community Coalition and McKnight's.

Even if you have never been inside the ACC, you can look at the Medicare Star Ratings, which indicate that the ACC is ranking as far below average with a 1 star overall rating. The data they use to derive their ratings comes from the ACC, NYSDOH inspections, the National Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, the CDC, the Skilled Nursing Facility Quality Reporting Program, the nursing home Minimum Data Set, Medicare Claims Quality Measures, Nursing Home Data Collection Intervals, and the Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing Program. The star ratings aren't just the uninformed opinion of somebody who owns an autobody shop and who has never had any education or experience in healthcare.

I don't understand how Joe can baldly lie to the public that there's nothing wrong with the care at the ACC. It really makes me wonder what's in it for him, that he's so indifferent to the suffering of others. Since he ran unopposed, perhaps he imagines that public opinion can't impact his businesses or political career.

The rest of you who sit up there and let him gaslight and insult senior volunteers without censuring him should think again. We didn't work for you to be elected for you to sit there like bumps on a log and talk about how hard it is to get volunteers, or how volunteers need to step up.

I'd like to end with a little anecdote, okay maybe a rant, about recent happenings at the ACC. I've spoken before about how the kitchen equipment used to be maintained by a company which hasn't been paid in well over a year, so that a lot of the kitchen machines are breaking down. Over the last weeks, the main dishwashing machine broke for 5 or 6 days. Meals were dispensed in clamshells, which certainly did not conform to requirements for food service under Title 18, Subchapter b-1, Part 490.8 Section (13) Disposable plates and utensils must not be regularly used for service. The dishwashing machine was fixed temporarily by a vendor who came in to repair the kitchen pump. I've talked to this legislative body about it and to individual legislators and in front of the county manager who is earning approximately \$160 grand a year, but doesn't believe he is capable of overseeing the ACC. This is about as ridiculous as the situation recently where both elevators at the ACC were broken, so that staff had to carry meals up and down the emergency stairs for days, as well as a patient who had to be carried down by four people in an evacuation chair, after staff had failed to protect her properly, so that she had to be hospitalized. What a circus. Was that reported to the DOH?

The misdirection comes from the top down in the county to neglect the ACC building and machinery until, or if, the CON is granted to InfiniteCare, so that they'll be stuck with the bills. We all heard Joe kicking the can just now on installing those air conditioning units, which have been gathering dust for how long? I really think it's time to get them installed.

Thank you.