

**SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTRY OF LONG-TERM CARE
LONG TERM CARE LICENSE CONSULTATIONS**

c/o Burson Canada
45 O'Connor St, Suite 1240
Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4
LTCHomes.Licensing@bursonglobal.com

PROJECT NAME: SOUTHBRIDGE CORNWALL 2
PROJECT NUMBER: #26-017
SUBMITTING ORGANIZATION: UNITED STEELWORKERS, LOCAL 9211
DATE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2026

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Standing of the submitting organization	2
Facts	3
Context	3
Pinecrest Nursing Home- Plantagenet	3
The Palace- Alexandria	4
Recent Closure of Residence Champlain in L'Original	4
Cornwall Labour Market	4
Statutes and regulations	4
Impact analysis	5
Impact on employees	5
Impact on residents and residents' families	5
Staffing challenges expected in Cornwall	6
Recommendations	6

Executive Summary

This submission pertains to a licence request from Yorkville Development LP by its general partner, Southbridge Care Homes (a limited partnership, by its general partner, Southbridge Health Care GP Inc.) for Southbridge Cornwall 2, a new long-term care home proposed to be located across from the existing Southbridge Cornwall long-term care home at 800 Nick Kaneb Drive in Cornwall, Ontario. Three current homes- Heartwood (Cornwall), Pinecrest (Plantagenet) and The Palace (Alexandria) will close when the new Southbridge Cornwall 2 completes development.

We submit that the request to close Pinecrest and The Palace should not be granted. The current homes should be renovated as necessary to meet current standards. The closure of these two homes has attracted strong opposition from the community, because it will cause harm to the social fabric of the rural communities of Prescott-Russell and Glengarry Counties.

These communities have special needs due to their largely Francophone, rural character. Additionally, the distance involved in travelling from the affected communities to the proposed new facility will create hardship for the elderly, disabled residents and their families. Travel to the proposed new facility will become more difficult, expensive and time consuming for families, and this would only hasten the decline of the frail elderly residents.

It will also cause disruption to the workforce at the two existing facilities and resulting unemployment. There will likely be difficulties in sourcing enough qualified, bilingual employees to properly staff the proposed new facility. For most current employees, commuting to the proposed new facility will not be a viable option.

Capital grants provided by the Province should be directed to the needs of the people of Ontario. Residents in long term care facilities are a uniquely vulnerable segment of the population. Capital expenditure would better serve the public if it were invested in development and improvement of the existing facilities.

Southbridge should access currently available capital grants to make necessary improvements to the current homes.

Standing of the submitting organization

Local 9211 of the United Steelworkers (USW) represents PSWs, RPNs, and service workers at Pinecrest and The Palace. The membership of this Local is primarily employed in the health care sector. USW also represents approximately 1500 people working in other enterprises in Prescott-Russell and Glengarry Counties. As such, the union is aligned with local community leaders¹ in opposing the Southbridge proposal.

¹ CBC News, October 7, 2026, “**Mayors fear potential closure of 3 long-term care homes east of Ottawa**”- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/care-home-close-plantagenet-alexandria-cornwall-9.7371610>

The USW is the largest private sector union in North America with more than 225,000 members in Canada and more than 850,000 members continent-wide. The USW is Canada's most diverse union, representing working people in every sector of the economy.

Facts

Context

As the population grows and the average age increases, Ontario is expected to see a 202% increase in dementia rates by 2050.² One of the key recommendations of Landmark Study #1 undertaken by the Alzheimer Society of Canada was that governments **work to address barriers for access to care among underserved populations, including rural communities**, Indigenous Peoples, and other diverse communities.³

Pinecrest Nursing Home - Plantagenet

This is a sixty-bed facility located in the village of Plantagenet in Prescott County, not far from the shores of the Ottawa River. It is a Class C facility. Its current structural and operational license is set to expire on March 31, 2027. This facility will have to be upgraded, redeveloped, or consolidated.

Plantagenet is a tiny village with a population of only 1,056. The facility mainly services the surrounding area, which is very rural in nature. The facility is designated under the *French Language Services Act*. The Act guarantees that 24/7 care must be available in French.

There are a total of 74 employees, 49% of whom are part-time. 81% of the employees are Francophone.

The population of Alfred-Plantagenet Township, where the facility is located, is 71% Francophone. It is one of the most heavily Francophone townships in the province.⁴

The village of Plantagenet is located 70 km from the City of Cornwall. In good weather, it is an approximately one-hour drive. There is no public transportation available for the trip.

20.4% of the population of Prescott-Russell is over 65. Ontario Ministry of Finance projections for the next 10 years predict that the percentage will remain relatively steady, although the region will experience a population surge due to relocation from the urban centre of Ottawa. The population is expected to grow by 49.8% from 2025 to 2051, ranking among the fastest-growing census divisions in Eastern Ontario. This means that the net number of seniors will increase, resulting in increased need for long term care in the region.⁵

² Alzheimer Society, “**Dementia numbers in Canada**”, <https://alzheimer.ca/en/about-dementia/what-dementia/dementia-numbers-canada>

³ Alzheimer Society, “**Recommendations of the Landmark Study Report #1**”, <https://alzheimer.ca/en/take-action/recommendations-landmark-study>

⁴ Government of Canada, 2021 Census of Population

⁵ Government of Ontario, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-population-projections>

The Palace - Alexandria

This is a seventy-bed facility located in the village of Alexandria in Glengarry County, about 20 kilometres from the provincial border with Quebec. It is a Class B facility. Its current structural and operational license was due to expire on March 31, 2026, and has been extended by one year to March 31, 2027. The facility will have to be upgraded, redeveloped, or consolidated. Under its previous ownership, the home was known as Community Nursing Home / The Palace (Le Palais).

Alexandria has a population of only 2,906. The facility services the surrounding, heavily rural Glengarry County and to some extent, Prescott and Russell Counties. Approximately 50% of the residents of Alexandria are Francophone.⁶ 59.2% of the population of Prescott-Russell is Francophone. It is the most heavily Francophone census division on Ontario.⁷ The management of the Home currently advertises that resident care services are available in French.

There are an estimated total of 113 employees. 51% of the employees are part-time, and 50% are Francophone.

The village of Alexandria is located 46 km from the City of Cornwall. In good weather, it takes approximately 40 minutes by car. There is no public transportation available for the trip.

In North Glengarry, approximately 27% of the population is over 65 years of age.

Recent Closure of Residence Champlain in L'Orignal

Earlier this year, Arch Corporation closed this 60-bed facility located in the small village of L'Orignal, located 26 km from Plantagenet. It was also designated under the French Language Services Act. The beds were moved to a new, large facility located in the urban area of Orleans in east Ottawa, approximately 74KM or 1 hour commute distant.

Cornwall Labour Market

As in many other areas of the province, there are shortages of qualified LTC staff in Cornwall.⁸ Only 19% of Cornwall residents speak French as their primary or first official language.⁹

Statutes and regulations

Under Section 99 of the *Fixing Long Term Care Act, 2021* (the Act), the Minister of Long Term Care is responsible for reviewing the Southbridge application. Among the factors the Minister is required to evaluate are the need of long-term care beds in an area, and public consultation.¹⁰

⁶ Government of Canada, 2021 Census of Population

⁷ Government of Canada, 2021 Census of Population

⁸ Cornwall Standard-Freeholder, June 18, 2020, "**Cornwall long-term care homes deny staff shortages**", <https://www.standard-freeholder.com/news/cornwall-long-term-care-homes-deny-staff-shortages/>

⁹ Government of Canada, 2021 Census of Population

¹⁰ Government of Ontario, Long term Care website, "**Apply to build new or redevelop existing long-term care beds**"; <https://www.ontario.ca/page/apply-build-new-or-redevelop-existing-long-term-care-beds>

The Preamble to the Act sets out important principles that should guide the Minister in making decisions under Section 99.

“The people of Ontario and their Government:

“Recognize that long-term care services and care must respect resident diversity and diversity in communities;

“Respect the requirements of the French Language Services Act in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of long-term care services for Ontario’s French-speaking communities;

...

“Acknowledge that a resident’s health and quality of life depend on integration and collaboration between an ecosystem of people, including fellow residents, family members, caregivers, long-term care home staff, volunteers, service providers, community and government”¹¹

Impact analysis

Impact on employees

Southbridge has not indicated to the Union whether current employees will be offered employment at the proposed new home in Cornwall, and whether it will recognize their years of service. Particularly in the case of Pinecrest, such an offer, even if made, would not be practical for most employees. The one-hour commute would be costly and time consuming, especially for part-time employees. There will definitely be job loss.

Although the Palace is a little bit closer to the proposed new home, an estimated 40-minute commute each way would still be required, dramatically increasing costs for employees as well as carbon emissions. And this only if Southbridge agrees to extend employment offers to the current workforce. Many of the employees currently live in the village and have short commutes or walk to work.

Employees such as PSWs and RPNs have invested their own time and money to obtain the necessary qualifications, with the expectation that they would be employed in their community.

Impact on residents and residents’ families

The loss of community identity that the closure will cause is not merely a subjective consideration. There is ample research providing strong evidence that housing institutionalized elders close to their original community is highly beneficial. Physical proximity is a strong determinate of the

¹¹ Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021 (S.O. 2021, c. 39, Sched. 1).

frequency of family visits, which has a direct correlation with the health and well-being of the elderly.¹²

Travel distance heavily deters visitors, particularly in rural or low-income communities where transportation is difficult.¹³

Regular visits from loved ones significantly improve a resident's mood, alertness, and overall communication. **Conversely, social isolation from family is strongly linked to higher rates of depression, accelerated cognitive decline, and behavioral symptoms of dementia.**¹⁴

Family involvement in institutional care is associated with **reduced mortality risks, lower infection rates, and fewer falls**. Family members know the resident's unique life history and habits. They often notice subtle clinical changes that busy staff might overlook, leading to faster medical interventions.

Staffing challenges expected in Cornwall

The proposed bed transfer to Cornwall would require the hiring of approximately 187 qualified employees who are able to communicate in French.¹⁵ We submit that in the Cornwall labour market, shortages of qualified, bilingual staff are almost a certainty. As demonstrated above, only 19% of Cornwall residents speak French as their primary or first official language.

Recommendations

The facts set out above can be summarized as follows:

- Both Pinecrest and the Palace serve heavily Francophone areas
- Both homes serve rural areas
- The proposed closure will cause job loss in these communities
- Residents will lose community identity
- The frequency of family visits will decrease due to travel time
- Family visits are an important factor in the well being of residents
- The proposed new facility will have difficulty in hiring sufficient qualified, bilingual staff.

Section 99 of the Act requires that the Minister make decisions that are in the public interest. The Minister must ensure that the intent of the Legislature, as set out in the Act, is upheld, and must

¹² McKnights Long-Term Care News, June 13, 2022: **“As closures kill community nursing homes, a new study confirms distance drives down needed visits”**- <https://www.mcknights.com/news/a-new-study-confirms-distance-drives-down-needed-visits-for-residents/>

¹³ National Library of Medicine, July 23, 2022: **“Who Visits Relatives in Nursing Homes? Predictors of at Least Weekly Visiting”** - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34634232/>

¹⁴ Mount St. Vincent University, “Practice Brief—Family Visitation in Long-Term Care During COVID-19”- https://www.msvu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Practice-Brief_Impact_2022-06-02_FINAL.pdf

¹⁵ This is the same number as the current combined workforce at Pinecrest and the Palace, and is within staffing ratio estimates published by the MLTC: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/long-term-care-staffing-study>

“Recognize that long-term care services and care must respect resident diversity and diversity in communities”. Additionally, the direct reference to the *French Language Services Act* in the Preamble to the *Fixing Long Term Care Act* means that special attention must be paid to the right of Francophone LTC residents to receive care in their own language.

Both Pinecrest and the Palace serve areas and populations that are unique because of their heavily rural, Francophone character. Cornwall is a regional urban centre in Eastern Ontario, but its social characteristics are distinct from those of the Plantagenet and Alexandria areas. Moving the beds will increase the isolation of the residents and dramatically increase the burden on residents’ families.

Southbridge will surely access public money to build the proposed new home in Cornwall. With respect, when allocating public money, the needs of the vulnerable residents and the communities affected should take precedence over the desire of Southbridge to maximize profits.

Generous funding is available from the Ministry to redevelop and renovate older homes that are not structurally compliant with current Ministry requirements: 85%, up to a maximum of \$370,600 per bed, for eligible major upgrades and structural modernizations, in addition to a design and planning grant.¹⁶

We therefore make the following recommendations:

- 1. That the proposal to close Pinecrest (60 beds) and the Palace (70 beds) and transfer the beds to the proposed new facility be rejected; and***
- 2. That Southbridge access currently available capital grants to redevelop the existing structures at both sites; and***
- 3. That the Minister make the continued provision of French language services for current and future long term care needs of the population of Prescott-Russell and Glengarry a condition of any approval granted under s.99 of the Act.***

This concludes our submission. Thank you for your careful consideration.

Hawkesbury, this 16th day of October, 2026.

¹⁶ Government of Ontario, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2025-long-term-care-home-capital-funding-policy>