

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA15-40

SB287

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Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public
Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives
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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2015**

**VOL.58
PART 13
4200 - 4550**

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 21, 2015

On Page 33, Calendar 506, Favorable Report of
the Joint Standing Committee on Human Services.
Substitute Senate Bill 287, AN ACT CONCERNING A
STUDY OF ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FROM
NUTRITIONAL SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Distinguished Chairman of the Committee on
Aging, Representative Serra, you have the floor,
sir.

REP. SERRA (33rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for acceptance
of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and
passage of the bill.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question's on acceptance of the Joint
Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the
bill. Will you remark, sir?

REP. SERRA (33rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is
an extension of that bill that this Legislature
passed a few years ago called AGING IN PLACE. This
is a part of that bill that deals with the
coordination of food security programs and service
by mandating State Department of Aging and DSS to

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hold quarterly meetings with nutritional stakeholders. With that, Mr. Speaker, I move adoption. I moved adoption, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Sir, I believe there is an amendment on this.

REP. SERRA (33rd):

And with that, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has in his possession an amendment, LCO 6880. I ask that it be called and I be allowed to summarize.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 6880, which had been previously designated Senate Amendment "A."

CLERK:

Senate Amendment "A," LCO 6880 as introduced by Representative - or Senator Flexer,
Representative Serra, and Senator Kelly.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Gentleman has sought leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there objection? Seeing none, you may proceed with summarization, sir.

REP. SERRA (33rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this really condenses what the Committee on Nutrition is responsible to do and to report to the State

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Department of Aging and Department of Social Services. These are some of the programs that many of us know: Meals on Wheels of South Central. What they're doing is to submit recommendations on a quarterly basis to the - both of the Departments that I - that I just enumerated. And with that Mr. Speaker, I move adoption.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Question before the Chamber is adoption of Senate "A." Will you remark? The distinguished ranking member of the Aging Committee, Representative Bolinsky.

REP. BOLINSKY (106th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry for my wandering ways. Just a quick point of clarification and a question for the proponent of the bill - of the amendment, please.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. BOLINSKY (106th):

To the good Chairman of the Aging Committee, if it is my understanding, what this amendment does is it takes away the study and, in fact, turns this into a collaborative effort between nutritional

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agencies in the state, bringing them together and creating, in effect, a better mouse trap when it comes to nutritional services for seniors.

So just as a matter of confirmation, through you, Mr. Speaker, if the good Chair would confirm that with a yes or no.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Serra.

REP. SERRA (33rd):

To the ranking member of the Aging Committee, he's - obviously was a part of it, and he's right on in his description of exactly what the Nutritional Committee is responsible for, through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Bolinsky.

REP. BOLINSKY (106th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the good Chair over there. To my colleagues in the House of Representatives, Senate Bill 287, as amended, is going to make nutritional services for seniors easier to obtain here in the State of Connecticut. And as a bonus to my colleagues,

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there is no - absolutely no - fiscal note. Thank
you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir. Would you care to remark
further on Senate Amendment "A?" Further on Senate
"A?" If not, let me try your minds. All those in
favor of Senate "A," please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The
amendment is adopted. [gavel]

Would you care to remark further on the bill
as amended? Further on the bill as amended? If
not, staff and guests to the Well of the House.
Members take your seats. The machine will be
opened.

CLERK:

[bell ringing] House of Representatives is
voting by roll. The House of Representatives is
voting by roll. Will members please report to the
Chamber immediately.

[pause]

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SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 287, as amended by Senate "A," in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number Voting	147
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	147
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	4

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The bill, as amended, is passed in concurrence with the Senate. [gavel]

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 218.

CLERK:

On Page 9, Calendar 218, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

HB 6682

S - 681

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2015**

**VOL. 58
PART 3
703 – 1013**

/jgj
SENATE

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SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The amendment passes. Senator Kennedy.

SENATOR KENNEDY:

One final comment, Madam President. If there's no objection, I would move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered, sir. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

On page 32, Calendar 160, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 287, AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR NUTRITIONAL SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS. Favorable Report of the Committee on Human Services. There's an amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Flexer, good afternoon, ma'am.

SENATOR FLEXER:

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR FLEXER:

Yes, Madam President. Madam President, the clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO No. 6880. I move the amendment and seek leave of the Chamber to summarize.

/jjj
SENATE

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May 6, 2015

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No. 6880, Senate "A," offered by Senators Flexer and Kelly and Representative Serra.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Flexer.

SENATOR FLEXER:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this amendment before us is a strike all amendment. It is to work - it's part of an effort of working with the Department of Aging and the Department of Social Services to get a better understanding of the nutritional services needs for senior citizens in our state. The Department of Aging will be working within an existing group to study those services and evaluate them and provide a report to us by July 1, 2016. And that is what the amendment does; it changes the date of the report, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

THE CHAIR:

Would you make a motion to adopt.

SENATOR FLEXER:

I move the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on adoption. Will you remark? Will you remark? I'll try your minds, then. All in favor of Senate "A," please say aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

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Opposed? Senate "A" is adopted. Senator Flexer.

SENATE FLEXER:

Madam President, if there's no objection, I move to place this item on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered.

Senator Duff, good afternoon, sir, again.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon. The next bill on the Go list was Calendar Page 39, Calendar 350, Senate Bill 847. I'd like to mark that PR, please.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF:

And any other bills that were marked go, I'd like to mark them PR for purposes of markings. Also on page 39, Calendar 353, Senate Bill 993, I'd like to refer that to the Appropriations Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, and I'd like to place that - have that referral immediately, please. Immediate referral.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR DUFF:

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CLERK:

On page 1, Calendar 445, Senate Resolution No. 34.
Also on page 1, Calendar 446, Senate Resolution No.
35. On page 4, Calendar 112, Senate Bill No. 347. On
page 5, Calendar 147, Senate Bill 924. Page 11,
Calendar 250, Senate Bill 386. Page 13, Calendar 276,
Senate Bill 258. Page 23, Calendar 402, Senate Bill
1042. Page 27, Calendar 75, Senate Bill 864. Page
28, Calendar 82, Senate Bill 892. Also on page 28,
Calendar 81, Senate Bill 891. Page 29, Calendar 118,
Senate Bill 870. Also on page 29, Calendar 113,
Senate Bill 348. Page 32, Calendar 160, Senate Bill
287. Page 35, Calendar 234, Senate Bill 975.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, will you please call for roll call vote on
the Consent Calendar. The machine is open.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call on today's Consent Calendar has
been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Ladies and gentlemen, please stand close by; the
machine is not opening.

(Chamber at ease.)

THE CHAIR:

Do you want to call for the vote again, please?

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered on today's
Consent Calendar in the Senate. Immediate roll call
has been ordered in the Senate on today's Consent
Calendar.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

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Senator Slossberg.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

CLERK:

On today's Consent Calendar

Total Number Voting	34
Necessary for Adoption	18
Those Voting Yea	34
Those Voting Nay	0
Absent/Not Voting	2

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar passes. At this time, we'll ask for any points of personal privilege. Senator Kennedy.

SENATOR KENNEDY:

Thank you, Madam President. I rise for the purposes of an announcement. The Environment Committee will meet tomorrow 15 minutes before the start of the first session of the House. I think it's gonna be around 10:45, but I'm not absolutely sure. But I just needed to make this formal announcement in front of this Body. The Environment meeting will be tomorrow, 15 minutes before the first House session tomorrow. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Formica. Hold on a minute. Senator Formica, please. Thank you.

SENATOR FORMICA:

Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**AGING
1 – 503**

**2015
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 mhr/gbr AGING COMMITTEE

February 17, 2015
 10:00 A.M.

CHAIRMEN: Senator Flexer
 Representative Serra

VICE CHAIRMEN: Senator Osten
 Representative Rovero

MEMBERS PRESENT:
 SENATOR: Kelly

REPRESENTATIVES: Adinolfi, Bolinsky, Cook,
 Hampton, Kokoruda,
 Luxemburg, Pavalock, Zoni

REP. SERRA: Good morning; I'd like to welcome you to another public hearing of the Aging Committee.

Before we start, I want to see if there's any comments to be made by the Senate Chair or the ranking member. Thank you; no comments.

First off, we're going to have, as I get the -- the title correct, the Acting-Commissioner of the Aging Committee.

Morning, Commissioner.

ACTING-COMMISSIONER ELIZABETH B. RITTER: Good morning, Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, the members of the Committee on Aging; thank you, very much, for the time today.

I have testimony for you on three bills that are on your agenda -- I believe you have copies -- and the first one would be Senate Bill 287, A TASK -- AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR NUTRITIONAL SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

As a designated sole state unit on aging in Connecticut, the State Department on Aging administers programs not only funded by the

SB716

H3671B

Older Americans' Act but also funded through various state appropriations and other federal grants in order to ensure that Connecticut's elders have access to the supported services necessary to live with dignity, security, and independence, and I know we all share this goal. The department is also responsible for planning and program development and operation of a comprehensive and integrated service delivery system for older persons in Connecticut, included congregate and home-delivered meals.

Last year alone, the Elderly Nutrition Program, operated through the five, regional area agencies on aging served more than two million meals. In June of 2014, the State Department on Aging submitted its State Plan on Aging for 2015 through '17. It was approved by Governor Malloy and submitted to the federal Administration for Community Living for its subsequent review, and it has been approved. One of the focused areas of this plan is promotion of healthy aging for the whole person. The state plan reflects the commitment of the department to supporting innovative nutrition services to increase flexibility of the program and a maximizing use of all available funding sources to maintain or expand the program wherever possible.

As you probably remember, the plan, which is then similar to the subsequent act passed by the Legislature last year, Public Act 14-73, AN ACT CONCERNING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES AND ELDERLY NUTRITION also includes leading regular meeting with the Department of Social Services and other nutrition stakeholders in order to move to coordination among programs serving older adults. As these quarterly meetings with nutrition stakeholders are already required by statute, the department believes that an

addition of another task force to study alternative funding sources for nutritional services for the elderly would duplicate current efforts and is unnecessary.

The Department on Aging welcomes the opportunity to provide information as we continue this work, including best practices to the committee, and I encourage you to use our resources, most particular the efforts outlined in the plan and resulting from Public Act 14-73, regarding elderly nutrition.

The second bill I have testimony for is Senate Bill 716, AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESPITE CARE PROGRAM. And I know we've all seen this bill for quite a few of the previous, consecutive sessions.

As you know, the State Department on Aging oversees the Connecticut Statewide Respite Care Program, which provides relief to caregivers with a loved one with Alzheimer's disease. Public Act 9-75 requires annual adjustments to the eligibility parameters to reflect Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustments. These adjustments result in expanded eligibility for the program every year, and effective July 1, 2015, the income limit will be \$44,591, and the asset limit will be \$118,549.

If program eligibility is increased beyond these amounts without an additional appropriation, it's our concern that this will likely reduce the amount of funds available to serve the low-income clients who have limited resources and are the greatest users of this program and in most need. Since there's not anticipated to be any additional appropriations to this program in the Governor's budget, we cannot support this proposal at this time.

DEBORAH MIGNEAULT: -- and members of the committee.
Thank you for having me this morning. I'm here
to testify on four bills before you.

For the record, my name is Deb Migneault; I'm
the Senior Policy Analyst at the Legislative
Commission on Aging, a nonpartisan public
policy office here at the State Capitol.

SB 716
SB 60
HB 685

I'm going to start by commenting on Senate Bill
287, AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY
ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR NUTRITIONAL
SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS. We certainly
support the intent of this bill. We had a
discussion last week at the public hearing
about nutrition services and how important they
are to the community based infrastructure, to
allow people to stay in their homes as they
age. And they're really important to maintain
health, quality of life, and overall
functioning for older adults.

Just wanted to comment that last year you, this
committee raised and the Legislature later
passed PA 14-73, which encouraged coordination
of food security programs and services by
mandating the State Department on Aging in
collaboration with the Department of Social
Services to hold quarterly meetings with
nutrition stakeholders. We are very pleased
with the work of this group, the State
Department on Aging and bringing together this
group. We are part of that group, and they've
met several times now. We would respectfully
and strongly suggest that the areas of study in
this task force be required of this already
established and legislatively mandated working
group instead of creating a duplicative task
force.

And the other piece of that is we would, if a
task force would move forward, again, we would,
we would hope that we could just imbed the

study areas into the existing group, but if a task force were to move forward, we would request that the Department of Social Services be included on that task force as they administer the SNAP program and also through Medicaid as the primary payer of home-delivered meals through the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders.

There are also some food security stakeholders that we would like to be included on that and meal-site representatives. All of these groups are represented on the already existing working group at, that the State Department on Aging is bringing together.

And I'm going to move on to Senate Bill 716, AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESPITE CARE PROGRAM. This is, of course, as you know, very, very important to our caregivers in Connecticut, and caregivers provide annually about \$5.8 billion in unpaid care. They help with a higher quality of life for their spouses, their neighbors, their parents, and friends. Almost every report that has been written studying home care, access to home care, diversion of nursing facilities in the state, long-term care needs' assessment, the Governor's 2013 Rebalancing Plan, the Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Task Force, the home care study that was conducted last year; all of these certainly talk about supporting our family caregivers as a critical piece of the infrastructure, so I -- I can't understate the importance of this program.

I just want to remind this committee that this is a line-item appropriation in the budget; it's not an entitlement program, so if you raise the asset limits on the program and the appropriation doesn't follow with it, you're actually limiting potentially the -- those

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mhr/gbr AGING COMMITTEE

February 17, 2015
10:00 A.M.

I appreciate your time today.

SENATOR FLEXER: Thank you, very much, for your testimony.

Are there any questions?

Thank you, very much.

RON D'AQUILA: Thank you.

SENATOR FLEXER: Next is Marie Allen, followed by John Rumberger.

MARIE ALLEN: Good afternoon, Senator Flexer and Representative Serra. My name is Marie Allen; I'm representing the Connecticut Area Agencies on Aging.

I have four pieces of your legislative agenda to comment on. I'm going to go very quickly through three, in keeping with your three-minute rule; however, it doesn't mean that they're any less important.

As Mr. Tobin just eloquently stated, he was able to keep his wife at home using Alzheimer's respite funds, prolonging the amount of time that she could use her own resources and the Alzheimer's respite funds before going onto Medicaid which ended up costing the state more money. So the area agencies on aging are very much in support Senate Bill 716.

I also wanted to note that we have served 715 individuals, Alzheimer's patients in 2014, and we've provided counseling services to over a thousand. For a very limited amount of money, we've been able to keep people home.

Second, Raised Bill 287, AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR NUTRITION. We are very much in favor of modernizing the regulation and identifying

HB6685
SB860

additional resources so that some of our harder-to-serve seniors receive the nutritional intake values that they need to stay healthy.

Third, Raised Bill 6685, AN ACT INCREASING HOME CARE PROVIDER RATES. I want to make it very clear, three of our agencies are access agencies in my region; southwest region alone, we had four providers stop providing services through the Connecticut Home Care Program. These were high-quality providers who walked away from the program because the Medicaid reimbursement did not make it feasible for them to continue to serve. So we're taking the poorest, the frailest seniors in the state with the most complex medical needs and we are limiting the pool of qualified providers to serve them.

So I also want to note that since 2007, we have only seen a one-percent increase which went into effect January 1, 2015. And the study by the Department of Social Services, if it has been done, has not been presented yet to the committee. I think that it will show that the rates, the reimbursement rates are far inadequate to meeting the needs of the agencies and the seniors that they serve.

SB860

And, finally, I have come to this committee -- sorry -- for five years, begging you for presumptive eligibility. Presumptive eligibility means we can get the senior in the community who's been discharged from the hospital and is very shaky in the community. We can get them those services immediately as opposed to bringing them out, only to have them go through a revolving door, back through the emergency room, into a nursing facility, who after six months we can take out with Money Follows the Person; ridiculous. Their housing

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*Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on
Aging Representing:
Agency on Aging of South Central CT
North Central Area Agency on Aging
Western CT Area Agency on Aging
Senior Resources - Agency on Aging Eastern CT
Southwestern CT Agency on Aging*

To: Honorable Senator Mae Flexer, Co-chairperson and Honorable Representative Joseph Serra, Co-chairperson and Members of the Aging Committee

DT: Submitted February 17, 2015

RE: Raised Bill 287, AN ACT Creating a Task Force to Study Alternative Funding Sources for Nutritional Services for Senior Citizens.

The Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging supports S.B. 287, An Act Creating a Task Force to Study Alternative Funding Sources for Nutritional Services for Senior Citizens. The Older Americans Act, Title III Elderly Nutrition Programs and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) have long been the only sources of nutritional support available to older adults. Individuals on a fixed income with variable medical expenses often find themselves at nutritional risk. Lack of basic nutrition has a negative effect on elders that corresponds to negative health outcomes. Connecticut is working diligently to improve the health outcomes for the dually eligible in an effort to improve the overall health and reduce Medicaid spending. The facts are clear: if you ingest fruit, vegetables and/or nutritional supplements, your serum levels of vitamins, minerals and trace elements will be higher, and this will confer a protective element against chronic diseases. ¹

Antiquated regulations and the changing dietary habits of seniors require an overhaul of current nutrition practices and the investigation of additional resources to help modernize nutrition programs. Transportation, menu and location must be considered when identifying successful programs to help supplement the nutritional intake of today's aging population. As the regional delivery coordinators for the Federal, Title III Elderly Nutrition Programs, the CT

Association of Area Agencies on Aging look forward to working as an integral partner on the task force.

1. http://fisherclinic.com/Nutrition_and_disease.html Fisher, Howard, The Relationship Between Nutrition, Disease and Aging: A Review

For further information on programs and services offered through the Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging:

Contact: Marie Allen, Executive Director

Telephone: 203-333-9288

Email: mallen@swcaa.org

Web site: www.ctagenciesonaging.org



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Email: aging.sda@ct.gov

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Written Testimony before the Aging Services Committee

Elizabeth B. Ritter on behalf of the State Department on Aging

February 17, 2015

Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, Senator Kelly, Representative Bolinsky and distinguished members of the Aging Committee. My name is Betsy Ritter. I am the Acting Commissioner of the State Department on Aging. I am here today to offer testimony regarding SB: 287: AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR NUTRITIONAL SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

As the designated sole State Unit on Aging for Connecticut, the State Department on Aging (SDA) administers programs not only funded by the Older Americans Act but also funded through various state appropriations and other federal grants in order to ensure that Connecticut's elders have access to the supportive services necessary to live with dignity, security, and independence. The Department is also responsible for planning and program development and operation of a comprehensive and integrated service delivery system for older persons in Connecticut including congregate and home-delivered meals. Last year alone the Elderly Nutrition Program, operated through the five regional area agencies on aging, served more than two million meals.

In June 2014, the State Department on Aging (SDA) submitted its State Plan on Aging for 2015-2017 as approved by Governor Malloy to the Federal Administration for Community Living for subsequent review and approval. One of the focus areas of this Plan is the promotion of Healthy Aging for the whole person. The State Plan reflects the commitment of the Department to supporting innovative nutrition services to increase flexibility of the program and to maximizing the use of all available funding sources to maintain or expand the program where possible. These services include not only a nutritious meal but also the opportunity for socialization and nutrition education services to maintain a healthier life style.

The Plan, similar to the subsequent Act passed by the legislature (Public Act 14-73: An Act Concerning Livable Communities and Elderly Nutrition) also includes leading regular meetings with the Department of Social Services and other nutrition stakeholders in order to move toward greater coordination between programs serving



older adults. Under the broader topic of Elderly Nutrition, the scope of these ongoing meetings is not restricted to existing state and federal programs. Such meetings have begun and as the meetings unfold we envision that a natural progression of stakeholder discussions is likely to include: the discussion of the various funding streams (state, federal, municipal, etc.); public and private nutrition programs; Connecticut's population of senior citizens (those age 60 and older) and the subsection of the senior citizen population currently known to be connected to the various programs. As quarterly meetings with nutrition service stakeholders are already required by statute, the department believes that an additional task force to study alternative funding sources for nutritional services for the elderly would duplicate current efforts and is unnecessary.

Within the Department, Registered Dietitian Jannett Haughton, who also holds a degree in Clinical Dietetics/ Nutrition and a Master's degree in Public Health, possesses an abundance of expertise to provide oversight, education and direction to our elderly nutrition projects throughout the state. Together with staff experienced in program operation and development, the Department stands ready to inform and work with stakeholders to continue, in whatever way possible, to improve services and access to older persons in Connecticut.

The SDA welcomes the opportunity to provide additional information including best practices to the Committee and I encourage the Committee to utilize our resources and, in particular, the efforts outlined in the Plan and resulting from PA 14-73 regarding elderly nutrition... Thank you for your time and attention.





Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging

A Nonpartisan Public Policy and Research Office of the Connecticut General Assembly

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board members from
across the state*

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Testimony of
Deb Migneault
Senior Policy Analyst
Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging

Aging Committee

February 17, 2015

Senator Flexer, Representative Serra and esteemed members of the Aging Committee, my name is Deb Migneault and I am the Senior Policy Analyst for Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging. I thank you for this opportunity to comment on SB 287, SB 716, SB 860, HB 6685, HB 6716, HB 6396, HB 6397 today.

As you know, Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging is the non-partisan, public policy office of the General Assembly devoted to preparing Connecticut for a significantly changed demographic and enhancing the lives of the present and future generations of older adults. For more than twenty years, the Legislative Commission on Aging has served as an effective leader in statewide efforts to promote choice and dignity and to enhance the quality of life for Connecticut's older adults and persons with disabilities.

SB 287: An Act Creating a Task Force to Study Alternative Funding Sources for Nutritional Services for Senior Citizens

~ CT's Legislative Commission on Aging Informs

CT's Legislative Commission on Aging supports the intent of this bill. As you know, nutrition services are an integral part of home and community based supports that provide adequate nutrition critical to health, quality of life and overall functioning of older adults and funding for nutrition programs has been tenuous, at best, over the last several years

In 2014, this committee raised an "aging in place" bill which later passed as PA 14-73 that encouraged this coordination of food security programs and services by mandating the State Department on Aging in collaboration with the Department of Social Services hold quarterly meetings with nutrition stakeholders. We are pleased with the State Department on Aging's work in this area and to be a part of this group.



We would respectfully and strongly suggest that the areas of study in this task force be required of this, already established, legislatively-mandated, working group instead of creating a duplicative task force.

However, if you decide to move forward with a separate task force, we would suggest that some other important stakeholder groups should be represented on the Task Force. Specifically, we would request that DSS, who administers the SNAP program and, through Medicaid, is the primary payer of home delivered meals through the CT Home Care Program for Elders, should be represented on this task force. Additionally, we would suggest other representatives including advocates for food security (i.e. End HungerCT) and meal sites be represented. Food security programs are all very much interrelated and interconnected, having all of the stakeholders at the table in these discussions is imperative for the task force's success. We also, respectfully request, that the Legislative Commission on Aging be represented on the task force. It should be noted that all of these above mentioned agencies and organizations are already represented on the nutrition stakeholder workgroup.

We look forward to working in partnership with the nutrition stakeholders across the state to identify ways to interconnected issues and improve the food security system.

SB 716: An Act Expanding Eligibility for Alzheimer's Disease Respite Care Program

~ CT's Legislative Commission on Aging Informs

This important program provides a needed respite for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias who remain in their homes and communities. Some estimate that those caregivers in Connecticut provide over \$5.8 billion of unpaid care annually – and importantly, a higher quality of life to their spouses, neighbors, parents and friends.

The Long-Term Care Needs Assessment (conducted in 2006), the 2013 Long-Term Services and Supports Plan, the Governor's 2013 Rebalancing Plan and the Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia (SA 13-11) all recommend providing enhanced supports to caregivers. Research clearly indicates that supporting caregivers with programs such as the CT Statewide Respite Care Program is critical to keeping individuals out of nursing homes. It also helps to maintain the health of the caregiver.

As you are aware, the Respite Program is not an entitlement; it is limited by its specific line item appropriation. Increasing the income limits, therefore, might simply have the effect of allowing a bigger pool to compete for the same money. It is important that along with expanded income criteria, the line-item appropriation for the program needs to be increased.

The CT Statewide Respite Care Program saves the state money by helping individuals with Alzheimer's disease remain at home instead of going to institutions and by helping their caregivers continue to provide support. The Legislative Commission on Aging supports all efforts to support this program, thus allowing individuals to receive the much needed respite that they require.



Testimony to the Aging Committee

(T8)

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

February 17, 2015

Regarding

- Senate Bill 287, An Act Creating A Task Force To Study Alternative Funding Sources For Nutritional Services For Senior Citizens
- Senate Bill 716, An Act Expanding Eligibility For The Alzheimer's Disease Respite Care Program
- Senate Bill 860, An Act Concerning Presumptive Medicaid Eligibility For Home Care
- House Bill 6684, An Act Concerning A Study Of Emergency Power Needs In Public Housing For The Elderly
- House Bill 6685, An Act Increasing Home Care Provider Rates
- House Bill 6716, An Act Expanding Access To Home Care

Good morning Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, and members of the Aging Committee. My name is Mag Morelli and I am the President of LeadingAge Connecticut, a membership organization representing mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of long term care, services and supports and including senior housing. On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut, I would like to testify on several of the bills before you today.

Senate Bill 287, An Act Creating A Task Force To Study Alternative Funding Sources For Nutritional Services For Senior Citizens

We thank the Committee for raising this bill that acknowledges the need to find adequate funding sources for elderly nutrition programs. Helping people to stay in the community is a basic goal of our state's long term care plan and a strong elderly nutrition program is central to the success of that goal. Unfortunately, the costs associated with the delivery of congregate and home delivered meals have increased dramatically over the last several years making it difficult for many providers to continue to provide the service. It is therefore critical that we find the funding that is necessary to ensure the continuation of these programs. For many older adults, the meal they receive at the congregate meal sites or through home delivery is the only nutritious meal they can afford. LeadingAge Connecticut supports this study and would be pleased to assist the Committee in any way possible.

Senate Bill 716, An Act Expanding Eligibility For The Alzheimer's Disease Respite Care Program

LeadingAge Connecticut strongly supports our state's respite care program and would support any effort to increase funding so as to ensure that those currently enrolled in the program continue to receive an adequate level of respite care as well as to expand enrollment to increase the number of individuals and their deserving caregivers who would be able to receive respite services. Many elders with dementia live within their own homes for many years with the majority of the caregiving being