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CITY OF STAMFORD  
THE SMITH HOUSE HEALTH CARE CENTER  
SKILLED NURSING CARE FACILITY  
88 ROCKRIMMON ROAD  
STAMFORD, CT 06903-2817

**Testimony of Executive Director Robert M. Mislow MHA, LNHA  
Concerning HB 6576  
Planning and Development Committee  
February 13, 2015**

Good morning/afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Miller and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee.

My name is Robert M. Mislow and I am here representing The City of Stamford Smith House Skilled Nursing Facility, and wish to testify today in SUPPORT of HB 6576 – An Act Exempting Municipally Owned Nursing Homes from Certain State Fees.

The Smith House has been providing skilled nursing care for Stamford residents and surrounding communities for over 50 years (opened 1963) and is owned and operated by the City of Stamford. We are licensed by the State Department of Public Health to care for 128 patients/residents and traditionally average between 92 to 95 percent occupancy and as an Outpatient Provider of Rehabilitation Services. We participate in both Medicare and Medicaid programs and maintain an average Medicaid population of eighty plus percent (80+ %). We employ one hundred fifty one City employees and are contracted with various local service companies to provide medical transportation, respiratory services, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, x-ray and laboratory testing and rehabilitative services.

As you are aware the cities in Connecticut have had to do more with less funding from State and Federal programs. The City of Stamford is not excluded from this reduction in support. However, unlike any other City in Connecticut, Stamford also provides an additional three million two hundred thousand (\$3,200,000.00) dollars per year in subsidies to support The Smith House in its care efforts. These funds come from City tax payers. So the residents of Stamford not only pay Federal and State taxes that go towards funding Medicare and Medicaid but also local taxes to fund this gap.

The State of Connecticut Nursing Home User Fee for The Smith House averages between six hundred forty three thousand (\$643,000.00) and six hundred seventy six thousand per year (\$676,000.00) which accounts for over twenty percent of the annual subsidy by the City of Stamford. Over the past five years it has accounted for three million one hundred eighty eight thousand dollars (\$3,188,000.00) in expense to The City and Smith House.

This, coupled with the recent reduction (effective 7/1/2014 thru 6/30/2015) in the Medicaid per diem rate to less than the rate that was in effect July 1, 2013 that is received by The Smith House, has further increased the burden the City has to endure.

As the Executive Director of The Smith House I am faced with daily challenges to continue to provide care to patients, residents and their families, make available a workplace for staff, and offer care to those people who need our services. If relief from these State fees is not afforded to the City of Stamford and a choice to discontinue these vital services is made where will all those "people" go? I respectfully urge your support for HB 6576- an Act Concerning Exempting Municipally Owned Nursing Homes from Certain State fees.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Mislow, MHA, LNHA  
Executive Director  
The City of Stamford Smith House Skilled Nursing Facility