Connecticut Association of Adult Day Services

Testimony to the Human Services Committee

February 18, 2016

SB 17, An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations for Human Services

Submitted by the Connecticut Association of Adult Day Services

The Connecticut Association of Adult Day Services, or CAADS, is an organization of forty-seven adult day centers from across the state of Connecticut. CAADS is pleased to submit testimony today on SB 17, *An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations for Human Services* and encourages the Committee to support maintaining the funding for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. The Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders provides the essential home and community based services and supports for older adults who are aging in place in their communities. Adult day programs are just one of those valuable and cost effective community based services and we provide programming, services and respite for hundreds of individuals and families throughout the state.

Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders

We are pleased that the Governor is supporting the state's rebalancing policy for long term services and supports and is proposing to maintain the current level of Medicaid funding for home and community based services such as adult day services. This long standing policy has provided older adults the right care, at the right time, and in the location of their choice – while saving the state millions of dollars and slowing the increase in Medicaid expenditures for long term care, services and supports.

Community based providers like adult day services are meeting the growing needs of Connecticut's older adults and their caregivers while preventing or delaying placements in skilled nursing facilities and helping to prevent the need for more expensive health care settings such as emergency rooms and acute care hospitals. The latest available annual report of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders indicated that in state fiscal year 2014, $87,662,725 in net savings were generated as a result of the reduced utilization of nursing facility beds due to the Connecticut Home Care Program. These community based services should be encouraged and we ask for your continued support.

Cut to the Statewide Alzheimer's Respite Program

We are very concerned with the proposed line item cut in another portion of the budget. This is a cut to the *Statewide Respite Program* within Department on Aging. The Governor's budget proposal seeks to cut the Department of Aging's *Statewide Respite Program* by $130,830 or more. We oppose this line item and we are concerned that the funding might be cut further if it is consolidated into the agency operating funds.

We know from experience that respite care is cost effective to the state and invaluable to family caregivers. Many elders with dementia live within their own homes for many years with the majority of the caregiving being provided by a spouse, relative, or close friend. It is both the elder and the caregiver who are served by the respite program. Adult day centers provide respite services to many of these individuals and we see firsthand how the respite program helps family caregivers continue to care for their loved ones at home. To

cut this funding and remove this support would push many of these families toward more expensive nursing homes or in-home paid caregivers which does not make fiscal sense for the state.

Family caregivers provide countless hours of unpaid long term care, services and supports. They are the true heroes of our long term services and supports system and providing them with needed respite is not only the right thing to do, but it is the prudent thing to do as they save our Medicaid program millions – possibly billions - of dollars every year.

The Value of Adult Day Services

We firmly believe adult day center services and other community based services funded by this programs save Connecticut significant long-term care dollars by meeting the growing needs of Connecticut's elderly and their caregivers in the community and preventing unnecessary and premature placements in skilled nursing facilities. The full day of services provided by adult day centers, including door to door transportation, is a struggle to provide on the current rate of $70.92 a day.

Adult Day Center Services provided through the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders

Adult Day Center Services are a *full day of care*
Activities, Companionship, Socialization & Supervision
Medication Administration by licensed Nurses
Nutritious Meals including Breakfast, Hot Lunch, Snacks, and continuous encouragement of liquids
Bathing/Showers are available and personal care is provided
Caregiver Support, Information, and Education are readily available
Escorted Transportation, door to door, is provided to and from the Center
Assistance in Coordinating and Planning client's long term care needs is available
Opportunities for daily face to face individual consultations, information and referral, support and assistance
Currently reimbursed $70.92 per day

Previous Cut to the State-funded portion of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders

The *state-funded portion* of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders was already negatively affected in the current state budget which froze for two years the intake into Category 1 of the state-funded portion of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. This is the level that provides services for those who are frail and in need of services, but not quite at nursing home level of care. The budget also increased the co-pay for individuals remaining in the state-funded portion of the program from a 7% cost share to a 9% cost share.

Previous Cut to the Alzheimer's Respite Program

Last year the Alzheimer's Respite Program was cut by 5% (or $108,000). As stated earlier, many elders with dementia live within their own homes for many years with the majority of the caregiving being provided by a spouse, relative, or close friend. It is both the elder and the caregiver who are served by the respite program. Adult day centers provide respite services to many of these individuals and we see firsthand how the respite program helps family caregivers continue to care for their loved ones at home.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

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View our video about how wonderful a day can be at a certified adult day center.
Go to www.leadingagect.org and click on ***Adult Day Services***