



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society
Connecticut
Chapter

Human Services Committee

Testimony Regarding Governor's S.B. No. 17, An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations for Human Services

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Slossberg, Representative McGee, Senator Markley, Representative Wood and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee,

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut Chapter is pleased to submit comments on this legislation. We are very concerned about the consolidation of line items and the focus of transitioning to block grants in this budget. We acknowledge the difficult economic situation and severe deficit that the entire State of Connecticut faces and the reality that severe cuts will occur in many programs, however this consolidation of line items limits transparency and clarity for the people of the state of Connecticut.

We urge the Human Services Committee to reject Section 32 of the bill which repeals the legislative oversight of the Medicaid Waiver process. The legislative committees and public hearing process provide for critical review and the opportunity for advocates and the public to share their concerns and stories about how these critical programs function.

The Department of Social Services is to be commended for the work that they do in developing, implementing and administering these extremely complex programs.

However the reality is that some of the Home and Community Based Services Medicaid Waivers have significant waiting lists and often an individual must move to a more costly nursing home while they wait for a slot on one of the waivers. We see this with the Medicaid Personal Care Assistance and the Acquired Brain Injury Waivers. If we take away the public hearing process in the Legislature, stake holders will lose an opportunity to engage in powerful and meaningful dialog with their elected officials.

Please oppose the consolidation of the budget line items to insure transparency and reject the proposal to remove the legislative oversight of Medicaid waivers.

Thank you.

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