



# Connecticut

Human Services Committee

February 23, 2016

Testimony of AARP Volunteer Mike Sopchak in Support of

Raised Senate Bill #114

AAC Presumptive Medicaid Eligibility for Home Care

Good afternoon, Chairpersons Abercrombie and Moore, Ranking Members Markley and Wood, members of the Human Services Committee. I am Mike Sopchak, an AARP volunteer advocate, from Northford, CT.

AARP is pleased to offer our strong support for **S.B. 114, AN ACT CONCERNING PRESUMPTIVE MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME CARE**, which would honor consumer preference to age with dignity in their own home and community for as long as possible.

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with an age 50+ membership of nearly 38 million nationwide, and approximately 600,000 here in Connecticut. AARP fights for issues that matter most to families such as retirement security, family caregiving and independent living options.

Nearly 90 percent of older adults age 65+ want the choice to remain in their own home as they age. Unfortunately, Medicaid determinations are complex, and when decisions must be made quickly, at a time of crisis, the delay in getting Medicaid approved home care services can result in unnecessary nursing home placement.

S.B. 114 addresses this barrier by streamlining Medicaid determinations, expediting access to home and community based services, and providing consumers with an alternative to nursing home care. The proposal is financially prudent and respects individual autonomy. By improving access to the supports seniors need to live independently at home, Connecticut can keep seniors out of more costly taxpayer funded nursing homes.

Examples from other states show that presumptive eligibility can result in extremely accurate determinations and a net savings to the state. A recent analysis by the Ohio Department of Aging found an accuracy rate of 99.83%. Additionally, presumptive eligibility in Washington

State generated significant savings by diverting clients from institutional care. Washington State determined that **“fast track” clients save Medicaid an average of \$1964 a month** by authorizing community services for people who would have entered an institution if services were delayed.

AARP believes that presumptive Medicaid eligibility for home and community based services is critical, if we are serious about rebalancing our long-term care system and respecting an individual’s choices to live with dignity in the setting they choose. I urge you to support S.B. 114. Thank you!

Source: Presumptive Eligibility for HCBS AFAM Binder 1-8-15, available at:  
[https://www.cga.ct.gov/hs/tfs%5C20151008 Medicaid%20Rates%20for%20Home%20Health%20Care%20Working%20Group%5C20151109/Presumptive%20Elig%20for%20HCBS%20AFAM%20Binder%201-8-15.pdf](https://www.cga.ct.gov/hs/tfs%5C20151008%20Medicaid%20Rates%20for%20Home%20Health%20Care%20Working%20Group%5C20151109/Presumptive%20Elig%20for%20HCBS%20AFAM%20Binder%201-8-15.pdf)