



Laurel Ridge
Health Care Center

Good evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and to all the members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Victoria Kozar, the Dementia Care Coordinator at Laurel Ridge Healthcare Center.

Thank you so much for your time and I want to begin by thanking the Appropriations Committee for their support in increases in last year's budget for nursing home employee wages and benefits. Laurel Ridge Healthcare Center has been providing high quality skilled nursing care for Ridgefield, CT and surrounding towns since 1993. We are licensed for 126 beds, catering to the various care needs of our community, whether it be short term rehabilitation, long term or memory care. We are incredibly proud of our dedicated staff that goes beyond the call of duty. We want to stay competitive and be the best in the region.

Like many nursing homes, Laurel Ridge is also facing the financial strain to meet the needs of the current nursing home population. As our state continues to age, it is crucial to have an ample supply of workers to meet the needs of our residents. Very often, we are also needing to provide 1:1 care for certain residents to help keep them safe.

The caregivers I work with are so devoted and truly the unsung heroes of healthcare. They do such an incredible job and I am so grateful, and proud of them for all that they do. With an increase in instances of Alzheimer's disease and dementia, this is a challenge that they meet with patience and understanding. To meet the needs of our memory care residents, they go through rigorous yearlong training to make sure they are up to date on all the best practices to help maintain their comfort and safety. It is an everyday priority to add life to the years of those they care for.

It's very concerning if a new case mix payment system is to take place, how would that affect the quality and kinds of care we provide? These new wage enhancements will not only help ensure continued excellence, but also the retention of quality staff. We are asking for your support to make nursing home funding a priority in this session's budget. We thank you in advance for your support in helping us deliver the best care possible to our residents and your loved ones.

642 Danbury Road • Ridgefield, CT 06877 • Tel: 203.438.8226 • Fax: 203.438.8378

LaurelRidgeHealth.com

Managed by Athena Health Care Systems