

## Sheltering Arms

a retirement care residence  
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**Testimony of Jennifer Granger, CEO and Janis Davis, VP Eldercare Services  
Sheltering Arms @ United Community & Family Services, Inc.**

*Re: H.B. 5055- H.B. No. 5005 AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE  
30, 2021  
Concerning*

**Department of Social Services Budget- Residential Care Home Funding**  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Human Services Public Hearing, February 19, 2020

Senator Osten, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony, specifically on the Department of Social Services Budget related to Residential Care Home Funding.

My name is Janis Davis and I am the Administrator/ VP of Eldercare Services at Sheltering Arms located in Norwich. I am here to express the strong need for a rate increase for residential care homes throughout the state. If our industry continues to be significantly underfunded it will be increasingly difficult to meet the challenging needs of our residents, many of whom would need to be moved to a much more restrictive environment such as a nursing home due to their inability to live alone.

The Governor's proposal to enable residential care homes to bill Medicaid acknowledges the need for higher rates. Our facility and the industry have significant concerns with this proposal especially since it cuts money out of the budget that has been dedicated to residential care homes without knowing how much or what services will be covered by Medicaid. We are concerned about this change and how it will impact our current rates and what the impact of any changes in staffing would be for our facility. We currently have very lean staff which already can make it difficult to operate. Any changes that are made must have a positive rate impact due to our very limited rate increases over the last 10 years.

Sheltering Arms currently has 30 licensed beds, all with private rooms. All of our residents must be over the age of 60 years of age, however the age of our current population is mid 70's to mid-90's, with 95% being state funded thus limiting our ability to bring in additional revenue to cover our costs. All residents are provided 24 hour supervision, medication administration, three meals a day, snacks, recreation activities inside the facility and in the community and laundry services.



This is all done for a low cost to the State of Connecticut while providing care to some of the most vulnerable people in the state. My home and other residential care homes throughout CT have had to get by with rates failing to keep up with costs and yet we serve as the safety net for many people, providing them with a home like environment that allows them to thrive.

Our employees deserve to be paid a fair wage for the work that they do every day. They have a lot of responsibility and work extremely hard to meet the needs of each and every resident we serve.

Attracting new people continues to be a challenge resulting in employee turnover for many homes. The cost of constant hiring, turnover and training only adds to these costs. Our facility strives to employ people in long term careers so that they can establish and maintain relationships with our residents. This leads to better long-term health outcomes, stability in the home and savings to our state.

Please support residential care home funding and uncap our rates so that we can help us keep our great employees and pay them complete wages.

Respectfully,



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