

Testimony of Christy Kovel, Director of Public Policy
Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter
Submitted to the Aging Committee
Tuesday February 23, 2021

Senator Slap, Representative Phipps, members of the Aging Committee, my name is Christy Kovel and I am the Director of Public Policy for the Alzheimer's Association CT Chapter. The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the following raised bill:

Raised Bill #900: *AN ACT INCREASING FUNDING FOR AGING IN PLACE INITIATIVES*

Connecticut is the 6th oldest state in the nation with the median age now at 40.9.ⁱ Eighty-three percent (83%) of the help provided to older adults in the United States comes from family members, friends or other unpaid caregivers, and nearly half of all caregivers who provide help to older adults do so for someone living with Alzheimer's or other dementia.

Most older adults want to stay at home and age in place in their homes and communities. The Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE) and the Alzheimer's Disease Respite Care Program provide the resources needed to support older adults with the challenges he/she may face as they age. These services may include Care Management Services, Adult Day Health Services, and Homemaker Services and home-delivered meals to name a few.

With the average yearly cost of nursing home care well over \$100,000, increasing funding for both the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and the Alzheimer's Respite Care program is more cost-efficient and honors consumer choice. On average, a person with Alzheimer's lives four to eight years after diagnosis, but can live as long as 20 years, depending on other factors. Home and Community Based Services are the less costly option and create autonomy in the home.

Increasing funding for both of these programs to meet the growing needs of Connecticut's changing demographics is good policy, fiscally smart, and supports a person's wish to age in place with dignity.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide comment on this bill.

ⁱ <https://ctbythenumbers.news/ctnews/2018/09/26/ct-is-6th-oldest-state-in-the-nation-with-projections-pointing-to-even-older-population-economic-ramifications>