



**Testimony to the Aging Committee**

**Presented by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut**

**February 23, 2021**

**Regarding**

**SB 418, An Act Increasing the Personal Needs Allowance for Certain Long-term Care Facility Residents and Authorizing a Deduction for Conservator expenses from the Amount of Income a Medicaid Recipient Applies to the Cost of Care**

**SB 900, An Act Increasing Funding for Aging in Place Initiatives**

**HB 6457, An Act Concerning a Study of Nursing Home Services**

**SB 896, An Act Concerning Long-Term Care Services**

**SB 898, An Act Concerning A Study of Medicaid-Funded State Programs**

Good afternoon Senator Slap, Senator Lopes, Senator Kelly, Representative Phipps, Representative Hughes, Representative Wilson and members of the Aging Committee.

My name is Mag Morelli and I am the president of LeadingAge Connecticut, an association of over 130 not-for-profit and value-driven providers representing the full continuum of aging services and senior housing. Our network of providers serves over 12,000 older adults and employs an estimated 15,000 staff. We are dedicated to advancing the quality of services and care for older adults in the setting of their choice and our advocacy efforts aim to continually make Connecticut a better place to grow older. We advocate for dependably excellent nursing home and assisted living care; affordable housing for everyone who needs it; a high-quality continuum of home and community-based services; Medicaid financing that ensures quality long-term care, services and supports in all settings; and a qualified, committed aging services workforce.

On behalf of [LeadingAge Connecticut](https://www.leadingageconnecticut.org/), I am pleased to present the following testimony on several of the bills that are before you today.

**SB 418, An Act Increasing the Personal Needs Allowance for Certain Long-term Care Facility Residents and Authorizing a Deduction for Conservator Expenses from the Amount of Income a Medicaid Recipient Applies to the Cost of Care**

Section 1 of this bill would increase the personal needs allowance for nursing home residents from \$60 to \$72 and we support this proposal. The personal needs allowance can enhance an individual's personal experience and quality of life as a resident of a nursing home and we commend the Committee for proposing this increase.

Section 2 of this bill is more concerning to us. It appears that the bill is proposing to fund conservator expenses by deducting those expenses from the applied income calculation for the resident. We are concerned because it is unclear how the deduction would be funded and we would object if the intent is to reduce the total amount paid to the nursing home by the amount of the deduction. It may be that the intent is to have the Medicaid payment to the nursing home increase by the amount of the applied income deduction, which would make the nursing home payment whole. If so, we would request that clear assurances be placed in the language of the bill that the deduction from the applied income calculation will not in any way reduce payments to the nursing home.

**SB 900, An Act Increasing Funding for Aging in Place Initiatives**

LeadingAge Connecticut is supportive of the Committee's efforts to increase the funding for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and the Alzheimer's Respite Program. We strongly believe in the principle of ensuring choice for persons seeking long term services and supports and we know that a strong and balanced continuum of care that provides the right care, in the right place, at the right time will lead to a more efficient and effective care delivery system. This bill would increase the funding for these initiatives which is needed to expand access to more individuals and their families.

**HB 6457, An Act Concerning Nursing Home Services**

**SB 898, An Act Concerning A Study of Medicaid-Funded State Programs**

**SB 896, An Act Concerning Long-Term Care Services**

LeadingAge Connecticut has no objection to these proposed bills and would be happy to assist the Committee and the state with such studies. We did participate in the process of developing the [2019 State Long Term Services and Supports Plan](#). We also bring the Committee's attention to the recently updated [report on Connecticut's Medicaid Long Term Care Need Projections](#) as well as the [Strategic Rebalancing Plan](#).

Thank you again for your continued efforts to raise the importance of aging services and to maintain the focus on the needs of older adults and the families who support them. And please consider LeadingAge Connecticut as a resource to you throughout the session.

Respectfully submitted,

Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

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