

Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6519

AN ACT CONCERNING DATA COLLECTION TO PREVENT MALNUTRITION

Title: AMONG SENIOR CITIZENS.

Vote Date: 3/31/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/4/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services

REASONS FOR BILL:

This legislation would utilize a survey provided by the National Aging Program Information System to identify scores correlating to the risk of malnutrition with elderly residents. This survey shall collect assessments from individuals and report average scores for elderly planning and service. This information will be used to evaluate the methods used to allocate funding for elderly nutrition programs based on factors such as elderly population, survey scores, and increased costs for providers that deliver meals on wheels for the elderly population. An annual report will be submitted to the committees having cognizance on the data on service levels and costs.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Amy Porter, State of Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services, Commissioner:](#)
Commissioner Porter testified in opposition for the following reasons: 1) Elderly Nutrition Programs are part of a bidding process and can not be presumed to win the contract award; 2) Connecticut has in place six criteria which determine need. The addition of "rural" factors could disrupt the formula; 3) the proposal would unnecessarily impact other programs effectively running; 4) technical language does not specify ADS or DSS as meals on wheels in a program run by both agencies; and 5) input is rendered by interested parties. ADS finds this is a vital part of the relationship between the agency and the parties, and they will continue to use their input to inform the agency's work.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Katie Pachkovsky, End Hunger Connecticut](#): Stated we should not forget the specific food assistance needs of older adults. Our elders can be extremely isolated and need connection to the community. Testified that those who are unaware of the program's resources should have access and understanding. Hopes the data collected can be used in ways to increase access and funding for Meals on Wheels.

[Suzi Craig, Mental Health Connecticut, Chief Strategy Officer](#): Believes data is critical to understand how state budget cuts have impacted senior citizens through meal delivery and where funding needs to be reinstated.

[Connecticut Association for Community Action](#): CAFCA works with Community Action Agencies that help connect individuals with programs and services. Five CAAs helped 14,450 elderly residents address food security in 2019. These services were even more critical at the height of the pandemic. CAFCA sees programs such as delivered meal programs are underfunded, affecting community action agencies in their work. CAFCA hopes this study will identify and recommend improvements for long-term success.

[Connecticut Association of Nutrition and Aging Service Providers \(CANASP\)](#): CANASP appreciates this bill as it codifies the collaborative approach to assessing the funding needs. They believe meal programs are an integral part of preventing malnutrition and many common chronic conditions can be treated with proper nutrition.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None offered.

Reported by: Cassandra Gallion

Date: 04/05/2021