



Testimony to the Public Health Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

Regarding

Senate Bill 1, An Act Equalizing Comprehensive Access to Mental, Behavioral and Physical Health Care in Response to the Pandemic

March 17, 2021

[LeadingAge Connecticut](#) is a statewide membership association representing not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of aging services, including not-for-profit skilled nursing facilities, residential care homes, home health care agencies, hospice agencies, adult day centers, assisted living communities, senior housing and life plan communities. As an association, we encourage the state and federal governments to value aging by investing in quality.

On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut I am pleased to submit testimony on *Senate Bill 1, An Act Equalizing Comprehensive Access to Mental, Behavioral and Physical Health Care in Response to the Pandemic* and specifically on Sections 4 and 7 as they relate to long-term care facilities.

Over the past year, the aging services field has been at the center of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 is a virus that has targeted the very people we serve. As such, our member organizations have been uniquely impacted by the pandemic, unlike any other health care provider sector. And we are proud of our efforts. LeadingAge Connecticut members have faced this pandemic head on and continue to do so as we protect and compassionately care for the most vulnerable older adults in our state.

Regarding Section 4 of this bill, our experience working with the Department of Public Health throughout the pandemic has been extremely positive, constructive and helpful. Their dedication and partnership over the past twelve months have been critical to our member organizations and the older adults they serve. We could not be more thankful. As an association, we would be pleased to provide the Department with any assistance that may be helpful if a study of the state's Covid-10 response is mandated.

Regarding Section 7 of this bill, LeadingAge Connecticut supports the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to examine racial disparities in public health. If established, we hope that the Commission would consider our association as a resource and partner in their study of racial disparities in health outcomes in long-term care facilities.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

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