

TO: Members of the Human Services and Appropriations Committees

Subject: HB 6446: New Asset Test for the Medicare Savings Program

Dear Legislators:

Thank you for your time and service to our great State.

This is my written testimony as a CT senior on fixed income who is dedicated to retaining our senior Connecticut residents. I believe CT is ranked 37th in senior friendliness –hence the senior exodus from our great state. We need legislation to retain and attract; not drive out seniors.

This Bill HB 6446 imposes a new asset test, in addition to the existing income eligibility test, which would further restrict access to the existing Medicare Savings Program (MSP).

I had hoped the Governor did not include this legislation as part of his proposed budget nor any legislation which would be more onerous on CT Seniors – especially those on fixed income.

Background:

In 2017, then Governor Malloy had also proposed a very restrictive asset test reducing income levels for MSP eligibility. The public reaction was so strong that, in January of 2018, a special session of the CGA had to be called to restore the existing eligibility rules, without an asset test.

Please note –this devastating pandemic has been detrimental to seniors –especially those on fixed income at the lower economic spectrum. Additional economic hardship indirectly attacking their health wellness would be totally horrific.

History indicates an asset test is complicated, requires additional government employees to administer and would be confusing to potential applicants. Other states tried and subsequently rescinded their asset test.

SENIORS ARE ASSETS TO CT

We need to invest in keeping them. Rising real estate taxes , electric bills and most importantly medical costs strongly impact our seniors.

Please – Please do not force upon some seniors, a decision to discontinue their prescription medicines and healthcare – this would be crushingly oppressive to our senior community.

I urge you not to approve an asset test to qualify for the Medicare Savings Program.

Sincerely,
William Lenahan
42 Alma Drive
Fairfield, CT 06824