

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5197

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE NEEDS OF SENIOR CITIZENS.

Vote Date: 3/10/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/3/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill was raised in order to study the needs of senior citizens.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Mr. Michael Werner, Policy Analyst, Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity: They submitted testimony in support of this bill. Any study with such a large scope may require an appropriation and a longer timeline to be effective. There also may exist reports and plans that may be available or soon to come which may address some of the concerns of this bill.

Ms. Amy Porter, Commissioner of the Dept. of Aging and Disability Services: They would be happy to consult with the commission on the report but point out that their State Unit on Aging creates an ongoing State Plan on Aging as required by the federal Older Americans Act. We feel that the State Plan, combined with the five area plans can serve as a solid foundation for the proposed study.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Ms. Anna Doroghazi, Policy and Outreach Director, AARP CT: They submitted comments supporting this bill. They offered results of an AARP study that they thought would be useful in a study of this nature. They indicated that it was critical for policymakers to understand what older adults think is important.

Ms. Sharon Gauthier, President, PAFY: Her testimony suggest that she is in support of this bill but believes that SB 174 and HB 5197 represent one bill. She appreciates that the aging commission is reviewing the needs of our elderly population.

Mr. Win Heimer, Executive Vice Pres., CT Alliance for Retired Americans: They are in support of this bill and believe that all our residents deserve to live out their retirement years in dignity and this bill can help move us in that direction. Their members, and seniors in general, look to an ability to be as independent as possible.

Mr. William Lenahan, Fairfield Senior Advocates: They offered comments in support of this proposal with the belief that sufficient resources must be available in future years with our increasing senior demographics. A study is necessary to measure senior demographic trends, and age in place choices that will affect long term resources.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Ms. Coco Sellman, CEO of All Pointe HomeCare: They oppose this bill and point out that it may be a too little, too late. They specialize in in-home complex nursing care of technology-dependent individuals with tracheostomies, ventilators, feeding tubes, and other intensive at-home medical interventions. They state that they are in a crisis, due to the nursing and home health aide shortages and they have lost nearly 30% of their clinicians during the pandemic. They ask that the state supports funding the system that will be the care providers for those with future needs.

Ms. Tracy Wodatch, President and CEO, CT Assoc. for Healthcare at Home: They oppose this legislation because it doesn't address the current funding needs. They point out that there is a critical workplace shortage in skilled home health and non-medical home care providers. They are struggling to recruit and retain staff due to underfunding coupled with the impact of both COVID and inflation. They stated that a study does not act on this need.

Mr. David Godbout, Constituent: He expressed opposition to all bills put forward by the committee under the claim of nullification.

Reported by:

Date: 3/17/22

**Cameron Clarke, Committee Clerk
Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk**