



An independent, nonpartisan office of the Connecticut General Assembly

NEWS

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Dr. Kerins Reappointed to CT Commission on Aging by Speaker Donovan

MADISON—Local resident Dr. Gerard J. Kerins, section chief of geriatrics at the Hospital of St. Raphael in New Haven, has been reappointed to serve on the 17-member citizen board of the Connecticut Commission on Aging by Speaker of the House of Representatives Christopher G. Donovan (D-Meriden).

Dr. Kerins was first appointed to the non-partisan independent research and public-policy arm of the State Legislature in 2005.

The state Capitol-based agency was created by the General Assembly in 1993 to help policymakers prepare for Connecticut's surging population of older adults. Already the nation's third oldest state, its population of residents 65 and older will soar 64 percent by 2030.

Connecticut is also home to one million baby boomers—the oldest of whom are approaching 65 themselves—accounting for nearly one-third of its entire population.

Commission on Aging Executive Director Julia Evans Starr said the agency's effectiveness is dramatically reinforced by Dr. Kerins' deep experience with older adults and his knowledge of the increasingly complex aging-related issues that confront Connecticut.

"Dr. Kerins' years of experience as one of the nation's most respected leaders in the field of geriatrics is extremely valuable in helping us prepare Connecticut for the future," Evans Starr said.

In addition to his position at St. Raphael, Dr. Kerins holds faculty positions at the Yale University School of Medicine and the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. His clinical areas of interest and research include Alzheimer's disease and the care of older adults with developmental disabilities. He is a consultant to the state Department of Developmental Services.

The Commission on Aging's recommendations to the General Assembly to reform the state's approach to long-term care, if implemented, would have saved Connecticut \$600 million in 2006, according to independent research by the Center on Aging at the University of Connecticut Health Center.

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The commission oversaw research authorized by the General Assembly in 2006 and conducted by the Center on Aging between 2006 and 2008. The comprehensive long-term care infrastructure-change recommendations included in the research are available on the commission's website at www.cga.ct.gov/coa.

This year the commission also identified and pursued up to \$11 million in new, untapped federal funds related to the Money Follows the Person program that will soon begin flowing to the state.

In addition to its 17 unpaid volunteer board members and four-person professional staff, the commission's 16 ex officio members include eight legislators and representatives of key Executive Branch agencies.

In carrying out its mission, the commission leads public/private-sector efforts to promote and improve public-policy on older adult issues including health care, long-term care, transportation, financial security, housing, employment and legal assistance.

The agency fills a unique role within state government by building bridges, opening dialogue and seeking solutions between influential groups including the Legislative and Executive branches of state government, local government, the business community, state and local organizations that serve critical needs of older citizens and statewide public/private sector coalitions such as the Connecticut Elder Action Network and Connecticut Long-Term Care Advisory Council.

