

27 Crossmon Rd  
New Milford, CT 06776  
(860) 350-6025  
[alicemmbb@aol.com](mailto:alicemmbb@aol.com)

February 6, 2007

Committee on Human Services  
**Proposed Bill #5483, An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Lifespan Respite Coalition**

Alice B. Buttwell – New Milford

To all distinguished members of the Committee on Human Services. Thank you very much for this important opportunity to address Proposed Bill #5483.

I am here today to strongly urge you to support this bill by asking that the Lifespan Respite Coalition be *recognized as a Lifespan Respite Council* that would annually report to the Governor and the legislature on networking with all agencies, public and private funding, and respite services that are provided here in CT.

Under the Caregivers Lifespan Respite Act of 2006, funding will become available in 2009. The networking being done by the Council will facilitate positive results for timely readiness of the State of CT's application for Federal Funding.

It is imperative that quality trained providers be available throughout CT to all family caregivers, so they can continue to care for their loved ones by having some form of quality respite care on a consistent basis. Respite is vital to the parent/caregiver of a child or children with disabilities, or at the onset of a short-term or life-long illness or disability of a family member at any age, or for taking responsibility of caring for elderly parent(s) who become disabled or increasingly ill for the remainder of their lives. Quality respite care also keeps families together within their communities, prevents expensive out-of-home placements, avoids a loss of living as a family in a home together, both for the family member and the caregiver. It also gives a much needed and necessary break to both the caregiver and family member in order to maintain their own emotional, physical and mental well-being and health, avoid burn-out, maintain spousal relationships, and helps to relieve unnecessary or additional stress to all family members.