



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

25 SIGOURNEY STREET • HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-5033

Telephone Number: (860) 424-5200 Fax Number: (860) 424-4966

Human Services Committee Public Hearing Tuesday, March 13, 2007

Good Morning Honorable Chairmen and Members of the Human Services Committee. I am Nancy Shaffer, State Long Term Care Ombudsman. The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program serves residents of skilled nursing facilities, residential care homes and, since 2004, residents of Managed Residential Community/Assisted Living Services (MRC/ALSA) facilities. I am here to speak to you today in strong support of Raised House Bill No. 7323, AN ACT CONCERNING LONG TERM CARE.

The language of Raised House Bill No. 7323 regarding posting of the Ombudsman Program mission and contact information in CT's Managed Residential Communities (MRC's) is simply an extension of the advocacy services to be provided to the residents of Managed Residential Communities/Assisted Living Services (MRC/ALSA) by the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program. The consumer of these services has the right to know who to contact when they have a concern or complaint regarding their services and/or care received through the MRC/ALSA. Currently there are CT statutes mandating that skilled nursing facilities and residential care homes post the Long Term Care Ombudsman contact information. We, the State and the Ombudsman Program have the responsibility to ensure that this information is readily available to the MRC/ALSA consumer.

As the State Long Term Care Ombudsman, I am pleased to be working collaboratively with the Department of Public Health's Assisted Living Regulations Advisory Committee. This is an excellent opportunity for the wide array of stakeholders to revisit the Assisted Living regulations. These regulations were developed more than a decade ago and it is now time to readdress the regulations and make any necessary adjustments based on the significantly changed needs of the "assisted living" population.

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program certainly appreciates the CT Assisted Living Association's most recent efforts to voluntarily post LTCOP mission and contact information. However, unfortunately, while nursing facilities have been required to post the same for quite some time, the Program continues to find many cases where the posted information is misleading and/or inaccurate. In this manner, consumers are either unaware or misinformed of their right to our advocacy services. In light of this, I also ask you to consider an amendment to the language of the bill (line 48) the term "conspicuous" be replaced with "accessible to consumer".

It is time to provide consumers readily available information when they have a complaint. I respectfully urge your support of Raised H.B. No. 7323.