

alzheimer's association®

Testimony By Nancy V. Leonard MSW,LCSW to the Human Services Committee in support of Raised Bill No. 5793 an act concerning grants for respite care services for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's Disease

Senator Harris, Representative Villano and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Nancy V. Leonard MSW.LCSW and I am the Sr. Director of Programs & Constituent Relations for the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter.

I have had the honor and the privilege of working with individuals and their caregivers who have been affected with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders for 24 years.

Respite Services provide the much needed break from the 24 hour a day 7 day a week job of caring for a someone with a dementia. It is important to know that the Connecticut Statewide Respite care Program assists caregivers with caring for individuals experiencing Multi infarct dementia, Parkinson's Disease, Lewy Body Dementia, Huntington's Disease, Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus, or Pick's Disease. The cost of services have increased in the past ten years, therefore our money given per caregiver provides less and less of an impact.

As we move towards the "Re Balancing " as mentioned in the Long Term Care Needs Assessment, We need to not only acknowledge that the caregivers are the backbone of community based services but we have to give them the tools to succeed. I could tell you amazing stories of courage and the true meaning of love & devotion as it pertains to the role of a caregiver for someone who has a cognitive impairment but in the interest of time I will let Mike Marinaccio tell you his story.

I am here to ask you to please support to increase the maximum grant to families under the respite care services program for Alzheimer's patients from three thousand five hundred dollars to seven thousand five hundred dollars.