



**Testimony of Brenda Kelley, State Director, AARP Connecticut  
On S.B. 414  
Human Services Committee  
February 28, 2008**

With the support of our 39 million AARP members nationwide, including over 625,000 in Connecticut, AARP believes that all Americans have the right to affordable health care, including long term care. That's why AARP is pleased to support S.B. 414, "An Act Concerning the State-Funded Home Care Program for the Disabled and Personal Care Assistance Program for the Disabled."

AARP believe that all people regardless of age or physical limitation should be able to choose the most appropriate least restrictive setting. The individual needing long term care services should control decisions about services that enable them to live as independently as possible. Last year, the legislature created a 40-person pilot program for people with disabilities between the ages of 18-64 disabilities so they could live independently in their own homes and communities.

S.B. 414 would help expand this successful program by adding 20 new slots. The bill would also increase the asset limit for the Home Care Program for the Disabled so that it is equal to the asset limits for the state funded portion of the Home Care program for Elders. Since its creation last year, the Home Care Program for the Disabled has served 17 individuals (9 individuals with multiple sclerosis, 3 individuals with Parkinson's disease, 2 persons with early onset Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia, and three other individuals with very rare disorders) that do not qualify for Medicaid and would otherwise end up in a nursing facility.

Additionally, S.B. 414 would increase the funding for the Medicaid Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Waiver Program by \$2.5 million. Currently, there is a long waiting list for the Medicaid PCA Waiver Program. Section 3 of S.B. 414 would help get a number of people off that waiting list, and would allow them to return to the community with self-directed long term care support.

Ideally, AARP supports a long term care system based on functional limitations, not preconceived categories, where all consumers can choose to receive care in the most appropriate, least restrictive setting. The Home Care Program for Elders has saved the state millions of dollars in long term care expense by decreasing our reliance on costly,

institutions. Providing people with disabilities similar options in the community can also be cost effective.

AARP has long championed a person's right to choose the most appropriate least restrictive long term care setting. We support S.B. 414 and urge this committee to vote favorably on the legislation.