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**SB #662 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID
ELIGIBILITY AND REIMBURSEMENT**
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I know first hand how important remaining at home and in the community is to someone in need of care.

Twenty six years ago I learned the significance of home and community-based care. I joined parents of children with brain injuries and their professional providers champion the need for appropriate and best long-term care services. I watched as individuals and families struggled with a system of rules not consumer friendly.

In 2000 I became aware of the need to renew my advocacy role. I was a family member in pursuit of home and community-based care for my husband Joe who at age 58 was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. Joe wanted to be home and in the community. My family and I wanted Joe home and in the community as long as possible. When that was no longer appropriate due to lack of support services, Joe became a Connecticut Veterans' Hospital resident.

When I sought counsel and information from organizations that provide services to the disabled, I learned Joe was too young and not poor enough. Somehow there was a disconnect between what I advocated for so many years ago and what was available.

I called attention to disabled individuals between the ages of 18 – 64 who were neither the right age nor impoverished enough to fit the current Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders or Medicaid eligibility requirement. I talked with families who wanted home and community-based support services. They too undertook a Herculean task to seek appropriate and best home and community-based care for a loved one at risk to their health and financial well-being.

I ask you to fund programs such as Money Follows the Person which will allow individuals to receive care in the community instead of a facility for as long as possible. I ask you to enact laws that will negate the necessity of a 6-month stay in a facility to receive home and community-based care. I ask you to allow individuals in need of assistance or their advocate the right to be an integral member in the plan-of-care team.

Premature admission into a skilled facility is part of the problem of increased health care costs. Please support and fund SB #662 (Raised) An Act Concerning Medicaid Eligibility and Reimbursement.