

State of Connecticut

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Testimony Before the Human Services Committee State Comptroller Nancy Wyman February 5, 2009

Good Morning Chairman Doyle, Chairman Walker, Senator Kane, Representative Gibbons and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee. I am State Comptroller Nancy Wyman and I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of **House Bill 5059, An Act Concerning Nursing Home Financial Oversight.**

Every resident of this state is effected by either the care *or* costs associated with our nursing home industry. The family and friends of nursing home patients trust that their loved ones are provided with the highest quality care in a safe and reliable setting. The situation we found ourselves in last year with nursing homes in receivership may have been avoided if greater oversight existed. In many cases the quality of care given to patients is directly linked to the financial management of the institution. Nursing homes that are fiscally un-healthy have potentially disastrous consequences for the clients who rely on their services.

Connecticut tax payers also expect that their money is being spent in the most efficient and cost effective manner. Our state ranks 4th in the nation in nursing home expenditures with \$1.3 billion spent each year on care. The public demands that we, as elected officials, enact real oversight over a sizeable industry that makes up a significant percentage of our budget. I believe that the proposal before you today is a step in the right direction to hold Connecticut's nursing homes financially accountable. Connecticut must take a proactive stance in preventing the devastating costs of mismanagement before it happens.

I worked last year with the members of this Committee and with the Attorney General on a similar proposal. Appropriate funding for performing financial audits would be required. I look forward to working with you as you move forward with this proposal.

Thank you.