

SB 138

Sharon Reiner
8 Gina Lane
Marlborough, CT 06447
860-295-8758
February 5, 2009

Testimony for February 5, 2009 Hearing

I support changes being made in the manner in which the Department of Administrative Services of the State of Connecticut seizes assets from recipients of state aid after their deaths.

After exhausting all the assets my mother and father had accumulated over a lifetime, my mother finally qualified for state assistance (L99 Medicaid for Long Term Care) effective January 1, 2006 for her care at the Marlborough Health Care Center, where she passed away October 15, 2007.

She received \$1,559 in Social Security and an annuity retirement check of \$210. Of that, she was permitted to retain around \$62 a month for personal needs as determined by the State of Connecticut Department of Social Services, the balance to the Marlborough Health Care Center for her care.

Those funds were used for cable television, daily newspaper, private phone service, hair care, and clothes. Her monies were used reflective of a lifelong thrifty lifestyle, so around \$800 did accumulate in the joint checking account we shared. She frequently discussed how those funds were to be her "burying money". She requested that I buy her a new outfit to be laid out in, and purchase flowers, etc. so she could have a suitable "send off." I followed my mother's wishes explicitly.

My mother was a member of the "Greatest Generation" whose husband served honorably in World War II; she was a child of the Great Depression, who never asked anything of her government, and was self reliant. At the time of her death, we had \$838.80 in her checking account. I had been shopping for a new recliner chair for her room.

Per her wishes, I spend \$95.40 on a floral stand for her wake, \$51.99 on new clothes for Mom, \$500 to Spencer Funeral Home for arrangements, and another \$162 on flowers for the funeral. After her death I received a letter from the State demanding \$419.40 (half of the \$838 in the joint checking account). So I had to write a check to the State from my own personal checking account.

Now, if the State had determined that she was allowed to keep \$62 a month for personal needs, it seemed unreasonable to me that the State wanted 50% of the funds available in the checking account at the time of her death. Money that the State determined was for **her personal needs**.

It was upsetting enough to lose my mother without the long arm of the state reaching for more funds after every dime she had accumulated during her lifetime had been expensed for her care.

I was and am disgusted by this state of affairs and look to you for correction so no other son or daughter has to go through what our family suffered.

Sharon Reiner