

Good morning. My name is Carol-Lynne Casey. I live in South Glastonbury and I am present today to speak in support of passage of Bill #452.

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Up until 2 years ago, I had no experience with nursing homes. And, my only experience with day care was the child day care center my children attended when they were younger. Then, my mom became very sick and went to a nursing home and my handicapped dad, with a multitude of medical issues, came to live with us. Our lives changed dramatically almost overnight.

I then came to know and experience first hand, the disappointment and sadness of the nursing home setting while at the same time, witnessing the opportunities and enrichment that adult day care afforded my dad.

Today, my 86 year-old dad still lives with us and still attends an adult day care center in East Hartford. My husband and I both work and we have 2 children ages 15 and 11. Because of my dad's numerous medical issues and his advancing age, it is unsafe for him to be at home alone. And, we are determined to keep my father out of a nursing home. Adult day care is the perfect solution for him and for us.

My dad is and always has been a very social person and he thrives from keeping the company of his peers while enjoying the many activities offered to him at the center. He also tires quickly of boredom if he has to stay at home everyday and for extended periods of time. Adult day care makes it possible for us to continue to work. It is a welcomed addition to my father's day. He is well cared for at the adult day care center and he truly enjoys the company he keeps there and the friendships he has made. If there were no adult day care, my dad would likely stay at home each day, with a caregiver, or I would be forced to quit my job to care for him, and in either case, he would feel alone and isolated and I believe his quality of life would rapidly diminish.

On one occasion, following a hospitalization, my dad went to a nursing home for rehabilitation – to get his strength back before he came home. After only 3 days at the nursing home, the Administrators told us that the nursing home could not provide my dad with the care and attention that he required and that it was unsafe for him to stay at the nursing home. So, my dad returned to our home, finished his rehabilitation there and shortly thereafter, returned to the adult day care where they happily welcomed him back.

The workers at the adult day center are devoted to their work and dedicated to their clients whom they treat with kindness, dignity and compassion. They truly are "can-do" people. And, the staff at the center are a constant in my dad's life. When my mom was in the nursing home, there was no continuity to her care – the staff was always changing and they never got to know her and as a result couldn't alert the family if things just didn't seem quite right. Conversely, at the adult day center, the staff seems to pick up on things regarding my dad and his health even before I do.

For the elderly, life can be so hard and it can be so difficult to do even the simplest things. Adult day care helps to fill their life with stimulation and activity. Friendships are formed in a loving, caring and safe environment. Adult day care centers provide an invaluable service to the seniors, their families and the community. And, at the end of the day, seniors like my dad, get to go home to their families – not remain in a nursing home. What could be better than that?

I urge your support of this bill to increase the rate for adult day services to provide proper funding so that adult day care centers can continue to serve our seniors and continue to do all that they do so very well. Thank you.