



Companions & Homemakers™

We know what you're going through.

February 19, 2009

Committee of Jurisdiction: Aging

Testimony of Companions & Homemakers, Inc. Regarding

Raised Bill No. 814

AN ACT CONCERNING PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANCE SERVICES UNDER THE CONNECTICUT HOME CARE PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY

Companions & Homemakers, Inc. (C&H) is a homemaker-companion agency in business since 1990. C&H has 10 offices throughout the State of Connecticut. The company cares for over 3000 older adults and employs approximately 1600 caregivers. C&H offers companion, homemaker, and personal care services (i.e., assistance with activities of daily living to clients with "chronic and stable" conditions).

C&H provides services to private clients as well as clients who qualify for services under the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE). Presently, however, homemaker-companion agencies like C&H are *not* allowed to provide "personal care" services to CHCPE clients—only companion, homemaker, and transportation services are allowed.

C&H supports **RB 814** to the extent it will enable custodial care agencies like it to provide "hands-on" personal care services to CHCPE clients. Some of the most evident benefits of permitting custodial care agencies like C&H to deliver personal care services to CHCPE clients include:

- Our personal care assistants are trained to provide hands-on personal care to "chronic and stable" individuals and are legally permitted to do so under Connecticut law. In fact, we have provided such services to our private clients, without incident, since 1994. Furthermore, no RN supervision is required because of the nature of personal care being provided (i.e., help with bathing, toileting, etc).
- Currently, DSS reimburses a home health aide agency \$24.40 per hour of CNA service *plus* the added cost of a monthly supervising visit by an RN (presently \$23.56 per 15 minutes or \$94.26 per hour). In contrast, C&H's hourly rate for its personal care assistant service is only \$19.00. This can save the State of Connecticut hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees.
- Because our personal care assistants also can perform companion and homemaker work for the same individual, CHCPE clients can enjoy continuity of care/service by the same caregiver on a consistent basis.
- In the case of the "consumer-directed PCA Waiver," allowing an agency like C&H to deliver this service provides participants with a much needed "middle of the road" choice between (a) having to coordinate their own care and become the employer of record and (b) having to rely on a medical, home health aide agency for their care.

Thank you for your consideration of these points. We will be happy to work with this Committee on this proposal and answer any questions.

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