

TESTIMONY OF

**JOHN R. QUINN, PRESIDENT AND CEO
VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CENTRAL CT
1 LONG WHARF DRIVE, NEW HAVEN, CT
203-859-6000**

PUBLIC HEARING – APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 9, 2009

GOOD AFTERNOON MEMBERS,

MY NAME IS JOHN R. QUINN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CENTRAL CT AND I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE 5% CUT IN MEDICAID PROPOSED IN GOVERNOR RELL’S DEFICIT MITIGATION PLAN.

MY VNA SERVES OVER 3, 547 PATIENTS ANNUALLY IN THE GREATER NEW HAVEN, MILFORD AND VALLEY AREAS INCLUDING OVER 840 MEDICAID RECIPIENTS YEARLY WHO RECEIVE HOME CARE SERVICES AND WILL BE ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY THE RECOMMENDED CUTS. COUPLED WITH THE PENDING MEDICARE CUTS FROM WASHINGTON, THE VNA WILL BE FORCED TO GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE CARING FOR OUR CLIENTS WHOSE REIMBURSEMENT DOES NOT COVER THE COST OF THEIR CARE UNDER THE GOVERNOR’S MITIGATION PLAN. OUR VNA WILL ALSO LOSE OVER \$428,000 IN FUNDING FROM THE ELIMINATION OF NON HOSPITAL BASED SERVICES UNDER THE NURTURING FAMILIES NETWORK, EFFECTING OVER 100 FAMILIES, AND NO FAULT OF OUR OWN WE WILL THEN BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT FOR THE GOVERNORS SELECTIVE CLOSURE. IF WE MUST SHUT DOWN MID-YEAR, THEN THE GOVERNOR’S MITIGATION PLAN SHOULD PROVIDE FUNDING FOR OUR EMPLOYEE’S UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS, SINCE SHE IS IN EFFECT LAYING THEM OFF.

BACK TO MEDICAID CUTS OF 5% AFFECTING HOMECARE SERVICE, I KNOW WELL THE CHALLENGE BEFORE YOU. I WAS ELECTED TO THE HOUSE IMMEDIATELY AFTER WATERGATE AND SERVED FOUR TERMS, INCLUDING ONE AS ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER. IN THIS CAPACITY I SERVED ON THE LEADERSHIP BILL SCREENING COMMITTEE AND HELPED DEVELOP THE DAILY HOUSE "GO LIST". THE NEED FOR PEOPLE TO TRUST IN THEIR ELECTED OFFICIALS AND TO TAKE ON THE INFLATION OF THE 70'S IS NOT DISSIMILAR TO THE TRUST THE VOTERS PLACED IN YOUR HANDS IN THE ELECTION OF 2008 TO LEAD US WITH COURAGE AND COMPASSION IN THESE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES.

SO I SAY TO YOU, WITH THE FULLEST OF UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT LIES BEFORE US AND THE PROCESS OF GOOD GOVERNMENT, IN THAT CUTTING MEDICAID, ON TOP OF CUTS FORTHCOMING ON MEDICARE FROM WASHINGTON, WILL CREATE A CHAIN REACTION. A CHAIN REACTION WHEREBY OUR FRAIL, OUR ELDERLY, OUR DISABLED CITIZENS WILL BE PREMATURELY INSTITUTIONALIZED OR NEEDLESSLY FORCED INTO PROLONGED HOSPITAL STAYS.

THIS CHAIN REACTION WILL DEVASTATE THE VNA SERVICES THAT PROVIDE A CURRENT SAFETY NET TO THE UN-INSURED, THE UNDER INSURED AND THE BELOW PAR MEDICAID INSURED, WITH THE FINAL CHAIN REACTION BEING NEW EXORBITANT COSTS TO THE STATE BY DESIMATING NON PROFIT HOME CARE SERVICES. HOME CARE PROVIDES A COST-EFFECTIVE MEANS FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR CONNECTICUT RESIDENCES. I STRONGLY BELIEVE HOME CARE PROVIDERS CAN BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION AND URGE YOU TO REJECT THIS ILL-ADVISED MEDICAID CUT. DOING SO

WILL PROVIDE CONNECTICUT WITH ECONOMIC BENEFITS THROUGH A STABLE HOME CARE INDUSTRY AND GROWING WORK FORCE.

REGARDLESS OF WHAT GENERATION OF LEGISLATORS SERVE IN THE HOLLOWED HOUSE AND SENATE CHAMBERS, OUR JOB HAS BEEN TO BE COMPASSIONATE LEADERS WITH GREAT FORSIGHT, AND TO BE THE CHECKS AND BALANCES OVER THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH DUE TO OUR BROAD AND "UP CLOSE" REPRESENTATION OF OUR CONSTITUENTS. I ASK YOU TO NOT CUT MEDICAID FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF OUR OWN CITIZENS WHO WOULD RATHER BE HOME, AS INDEPENDENT AS POSSIBLE, WITH THE BEST VISITING NURSE HOME CARE RATHER THAN TO HAVE THEIR OPTIONS REDUCED TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION. I ASK THAT YOU NOT CUT MEDICAID TODAY, AND THUS FIND YOURSELF INCREASING EXPENSES TOMORROW BY DESTROYING NON PROFIT HOME CARE SERVICE PROVIDERS.

WE WILL WORK WITH YOU TO ACHIEVE SAVINGS IN HOME HEALTH CARE. WE ARE WILLING TO BE SEATED AT THE TABLE WITH YOU TO LOOK AT THE LONG TERM \$ SAVINGS BASED ON A STRONG SAFETY NET VNA TYPE SERVICE MODEL TO KEEP OUR NEIGHBORS IN THEIR HOME AND REDUCE HOSPITAL READMISSIONS AND NURSING HOME INSTITUTIONALIZATIONS.

THANK YOU,

JOHN R QUINN