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**The Appropriations Committee  
Public Hearing - February 18, 2009**

**Testimony on  
Governor Rell's Proposed Budget for the Department of Social Services  
and Human Services Programs**

Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Rob Mooz and I am a resident of Essex, CT. I am 48 years old and have been living with multiple sclerosis for over 29 years. I am here to present testimony on Governor Rell's proposed budget for FY 2010 and FY 2011.

Thank you for accepting me into the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled. I became a client of the program in mid 2008. I am here to thank Governor Rell for including this vital program in her proposed budget. I urge the Appropriations Committee to also include the \$720,000 for this program in the 2010 and 2011 budget.

The Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled (CHCPD) is the sole reason that I can enjoy a respectable quality of life. The program and its various ingredients are the only way that I have been able to remain independent with help in my own home. I would be institutionalized in a nursing home if I did not have the program.

My care manager from the Agency on Aging of South Central CT, Erin, is very caring, helpful and full of information and resources. I owe a tremendous amount of thanks to my home care aide, Renee, because of her I am able to live comfortably alone.

I receive Meals on Wheels... Because of these I can eat when I am unable to walk or stand, which occurs all too frequently. Before this I was not eating and my nutrition was very poor. The quality of the food is good and I enjoy the socialization that comes when the volunteers deliver the meals.

Renee helps me with many aspects of caring for my home and my wellbeing. Before my acceptance onto the program, I was constantly falling and crawling around in my apartment. I was totally struggling with taking care of myself and my home.

Erin, my care manager, has suggested that I get a Life Alert type system. As you may know, that MS is very unpredictable and there are times when I am very weak or all of a sudden my legs may give out. I believe that this will help as a preventative measure so that if I fall, I will

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not be in a position of being stuck or injured. I will be able to call for help....

Since I now receive this assistance from Renee, meals on wheels and the help of the care coordination from Erin, I am able to focus on remaining more independent and safe.

I would also like to address some of the proposed changes to the ConnPACE program and how they will impact me and others that I know with MS. I have been using ConnPACE for approximately six years. It is the only way that I can afford my prescriptions. The medications that I use for my MS are covered by ConnPACE, however with some of the proposed changes, it seems like my access to the medications will be compromised.

I currently use a MS disease modifying medication to reduce how often I have MS attacks. Without this expensive medication, I most likely would end up in the hospital on a regular basis. I also take a number of medications to help manage the symptoms of my multiple sclerosis. For example I am using medications that help manage bladder incontinence, sleep challenges and fatigue.

One proposed change to ConnPACE is to require that individuals participate in the benchmark plans under Medicare Part D. I have found it difficult to choose a plan, because of the variety of medications that I use. Many of the benchmark plans do not currently provide access to the products that I need. CHOICES has been an essential resource for me as I gathered information and worked to understand the complexities of Medicare Part D.

Other concerns that I have about ConnPace include that since the program is a safety net prescription drug program for Connecticut's vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities. The opportunity to enroll must be available when people qualify and need medication.

In addition, the requirement that certain medications would need prior authorization before an individual could get the medication will also be a burden to me and others. I have already been through a huge battle with getting my fatigue medication covered, the thought of going through that again and also asking my doctor to jump through so many hoops is very distressing

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.