

TESTIMONY
of
Linda F. Martin
Before the Aging Committee
of the
Connecticut General Assembly

February 16, 2010

Chairpersons Sen. Edith Prague and Rep. Joseph Serra and Honorable Members of the Aging Committee my name is Linda Martin. I am here to submit written testimony in support of **An Act Concerning the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program, H.B. 5111.**

Six years ago my mother's physical struggle with Alzheimer's became evident to my brothers and I. I now believe that prior to our awareness, our mother, Lillian Payne was aware of changes in her ability to focus her attention and she quietly tried to keep her life and interactions as normal as possible.

In December 2006 it was apparent that she was losing her battle with the condition so my husband and I moved her into our home. For six hours a day, four days a week, my mother attended an adult day care program with the financial assistance of the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program. I will always appreciate the consistency, attention and genuine care that she received from the Daycare staff. Often I would communicate with the staff how my mom's evenings went and they would monitor her interactions and activities during the day and report back to me. During one of my mother's episodes the Day Care Director gave her home telephone number to me to use if I became overwhelmed.

I could not have afforded the day care program without the financial grant from the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program and I want every family who needs it to get the same opportunity. In June of last year it was necessary to admit my mother into a nursing home.

In summary, the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program allowed me to cope with the emotional and physical stress of caring for the person who cared for me. Respite care is a cost effective way to delay nursing home care and is far less expensive. I understand that nursing home care will easily cost \$70,000 a year. Respite care equates to both taxpayer savings and a better quality of life for the Alzheimer's patient. This economic comparison doesn't even touch on the health of the caregiver. The caregiver's productivity, ability to earn wages and pay taxes is often negatively impacted by the responsibilities and mental stress of caring.

Thank you for listening to reasons that I support the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program, and thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time. If you have questions or concerns at a future date please do not hesitate to contact me.

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