M. Jodi Rell
Governor

State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

Peter H. O'Meara
Commissioner

Kathryn du Pree
Deputy Commissioner

TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
TO THE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
March 5, 2010

Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and members of the Appropriations Committee. I am Peter O'Meara, Commissioner of Developmental Services. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **S.B. 355, An Act Concerning Capital Improvements Required by the Department of Developmental Services.**

This bill would allow the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to provide a higher room and board rate to Community Living Arrangements (CLAs) when capital improvements are required by DDS for the health and safety of residents in those homes. Public Act 09-5, SSS, maintained SFY 2009 CLA rates for SFY 2010 and SFY 2011.

There are 704 Community Living Arrangements (CLAs) licensed by the Department of Developmental Services, which serve approximately 2,400 individuals. The Department of Social Services (DSS) funds the room and board costs of these facilities under the Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD) program. DDS funds staffing and service costs for these individuals.

The Department of Social Services and the Department of Developmental Services, in a joint process, approve, on average, $2.5 to $3.0 million in capital improvements for homes each year, involving between 125 and 175 CLAs. Assuming that the majority of projects relate to safety corrections or improvements ($2.5 million) and using an average useful life of 10 years with a Rate of Return (ROR) of 4.5%, the preliminary estimated cost of this bill would be approximately $320,000 (DSS AABD accounts).

DDS strongly supports allowing room and board rates to be set higher in these cases where the health and safety of our consumers is involved. Where roofs need repair, or a furnace needs replacing, or a sprinkler system needs to be installed, DDS feels that the safety of the consumer must be paramount. Other capital projects that would fall into the health and safety category are improvements for consumer accessibility, replacement of septic systems and installation of backup generators to protect consumers in case of a power outage. All of these types of capital improvements are necessary to preserve the health and well-being of DDS consumers.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support of S.B. 355. Please contact Rod O'Connor, DDS Legislative Liaison, at (860) 418-6130, if you have any questions.

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