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Human Services Committee
Public Hearing- March 8, 2011

I am submitting this testimony in support of **SB 297: AN ACT CONCERNING AN AMENDMENT TO THE MEDICAID STATE PLAN UNDER SECTION 1915i OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT TO PROVIDE HOME CARE SERVICES.**

Individuals who need long term care have the right to determine how and where they receive that care. People who want to remain in, or return to the community should be able to do so. This amendment would help assure that individuals can make their own decisions regarding their care.

Our organization testified last week about the number of individuals currently on the waitlist for the Medicaid ABI Waiver program. With no access to services, and with the waiting list over two years long, these individuals find themselves in incredibly difficult, often unsafe, conditions. Currently individuals must be institutionalized for three months and not exceed level of care requirements in order to avoid waiting lists for home and community based services through the Money Follows the Person program.

This amendment will eliminate the incentive to gain access to the Medicaid Waiver program through institutionalization and help reduce Connecticut's reliance on expensive institutional long term care. In addition, this amendment would save Connecticut taxpayers by enhancing federal reimbursement under the State Balancing Incentive Program and would qualify the state funded Home Care for Elders and Home Care for the Disabled programs for Medicaid Reimbursement. Simplifying administration, developing standardized contracting, application and assessment instruments and improving program efficiency would also save the State money.

Because the 1915i amendment bases services on functional needs and not on disability, the current silos of services would be eliminated, creating a better system for all.

I urge to support all those with long term care needs by passing SB 297.

Thank you.