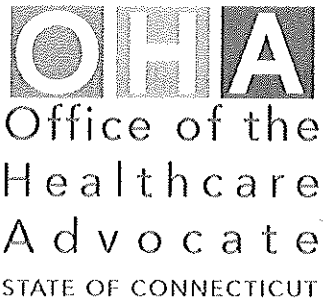

Testimony of Victoria Veltri, Acting State Healthcare Advocate
Before the Human Services Committee
In Support of SB 297
March 8, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Musto, Representative Tercyak, Senator Markley, Representative Gibbons and members of the Human Services Committee. For the record, I am Victoria Veltri, the Acting State Healthcare Advocate. My office, the Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA) is an independent state agency with a three-fold mission: assuring managed care consumers have access to medically necessary healthcare; educating consumers about their rights and responsibilities under health insurance plans; and, informing you of problems consumers face in accessing care and proposing solutions to those problems.

I testify today on behalf of OHA in support SB 297, *An Act Concerning An Amendment To The Medicaid State Plan Under Section 1915(I) Of The Social Security Act To Provide Home Care Services.* This bill offers a long overdue and important solution to a pressing problem in Medicaid program, and I ask for your support. OHA supports this well thought out initiative, encouraged by the Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act (PPACA) that uses the vehicle of a state plan amendment to greatly increase the number of Medicaid recipients who can received needed services in much less costly home and community-based settings.

The process unifies the criteria for qualifying for home and community based services under the state plan amendment to functional criteria, a fairer system for determining eligibility for services. The range of services is also unified streamlining the home and community based services system.

There are coverage limitations under this proposal—coverage is not unlimited. The costs of coverage are limited to a monthly care plan cost cap equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the weighted average cost of the State's monthly payment for services in skilled nursing facilities and intermediate care facilities.

The state is eligible for additional federal matching assistance percentage (FMAP) payments under this proposal, under the State Balancing Incentive Payments Program established by the PPACA.

SB 297 is a positive step toward the goal of allowing people to receive services in home and community based settings. Thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of SB 297. If you have any questions or concerns about my testimony, please contact me at (860) 297-3982 or victoria.veltri@ct.gov.