



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE AGING COMMITTEE

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Under Secretary

Office of Policy and Management

Testimony Supporting House Bill 6379

AN ACT DELAYING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT ON AGING

Good morning Senator Prague, Representative Serra and distinguished members of the Aging Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill No. 6379, An Act Delaying the Establishment of the State Department on Aging.

Under this bill, the establishment of the State Department on Aging is delayed until July 2013. Given the state's current fiscal situation, we do not believe that now is the time to expand government by creating a new state agency. Currently, the Aging Services Division in the Department of Social Services provides a broad range of services to the elderly to promote self-direction, self-reliance and independent living. The current structure is consistent with the majority of states - 75% of other states have a comparable structure where elderly services are included in a larger umbrella agency.

The bill before you today is necessary to implement the Governor's budget and will result in a savings of approximately \$450,000. Without passage, additional staff and resources will be required to establish a new agency. In these difficult economic times, the focus of the administration must be on maintaining and strengthening existing core services for the elderly within the Department of Social Services rather than using the state's limited resources to create a new agency. This proposal will not diminish, or in any way impact, delivery of essential services provided to the state's elderly residents. We look forward to working with the chairs and members of this committee as 2013 approaches on this issue and other critical service delivery issues for Connecticut's senior citizens.

Thank you again for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.