



## State of Connecticut

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#### Appropriations Committee Public Hearing

Senator Kevin Kelly

Testimony on Raised H.B. No. 6519, An Act Concerning Medicaid Savings.

March 31, 2011

Good Afternoon Chairwomen Harp and Walker, Ranking Members Kane and Miner. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on *Raised H.B. No. 6519, An Act Concerning Medicaid Savings*.

Because of my background in elder law and advocacy on behalf of seniors, I was appointed Ranking Member of the legislature's Aging Committee, the status of which was raised from select committee to standing committee earlier this year. I have been working closely with Senator Prague and Representative Serra and other members of the committee to create policies that enable seniors to "age in place" in their communities rather than in nursing homes.

In order to rebalance our long term care dollars away from institutionalization and towards home care, we must develop the necessary infrastructure to create a robust home care industry that can manage both our current aging population and the baby boomer population by providing community based services as an alternative.

Although I strongly support the concept of H.B. 6519, which would require the identification of savings in the Medicaid program, I have one concern: the language of the bill requires the Commissioner of DSS, in consultation with DMHAS and DCF to submit a report to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health Committees, but excludes the Aging Committee from engaging in this process.

As a standing committee, Aging has cognizance of all matters relating to senior citizens. Because seniors happen to be the largest participant group of the Medicaid program, I believe that it is appropriate and necessary to include the committee in all matters relating to Medicaid. I would ask the committee to consider amending H.B. 6519 to include the Aging Committee.

Again, thank you for hearing my testimony. I urge the committee to consider my suggestion, and I would be happy to take any questions from committee members.