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Testimony of
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Before the
Aging Committee
February 28, 2012

Re: S.B. 142 AA Increasing Eligibility for the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly
H.B. 5179, AA Increasing Temporary Family Assistance Benefits for Grandparents and Other
Nonparent Caretaker Relatives

Senators Prague and Kelly, Representatives Serra and Frey, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) on the above referenced bills.

S.B. 142 AA Increasing Eligibility for the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly

S.B. 142 would extend eligibility to the Connecticut Home-Care Program for the Elderly to those with assets of \$50,000 for single individuals and \$75,000 for married couples. This bill could benefit Connecticut seniors who represent 14% of the state population.

CT Specific Data¹

- 14% of Connecticut's population are aged 65 and over – 285,405 women and 202,650 men.
- Within the senior population, 59% are female and 41% are male.
- 66% of Connecticut residents over the age of 85 are female.

Access to the Home-Care Program insures that elders and people with disabilities remain in their homes, rather than long-term care institutions. Passage of this bill would allow these individuals to remain independent through self-directed care in a community setting.

**H.B. 5179, AA Increasing Temporary Family Assistance Benefits for Grandparents and Other
Nonparent Caretaker Relatives**

H.B. 5179 would provide equal benefits to grandparents and caretaker relatives who are raising children regardless of whether the child is committed to the Department of Children and Families. Passage of this bill

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2009 Population Estimates.

would benefit 52,203 of Connecticut's children who are living in grandparent-headed or nonparent caretaker households.

CT Specific Data²

- 39,797 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.7% of all children in the state)
- Another 12,406 children living in households heading by other relatives (1.5% of all children in the state).

If economically eligible, these grandparents and caretakers may receive on average \$746 to \$875 for one child from the Department of Children and Families' subsidized program; or receive "child only" TFA payments averaging \$344 a month for one child.³ It would be beneficial to provide all the financial assistance that is available to assist these grandparents and caretakers in raising the children that they have taken into their home.

We look forward to working with you to address these important issues. Thank you for your consideration.

² AARP Foundation. *Connecticut GrandFacts*, October 2007.

³ Office of Legislative Research Report. *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, 2008-R-0048, January 31, 2008.