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Testimony in Support of the
Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled
Appropriations Committee Public Hearing – February 17, 2012

Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Thomas Maloney. I reside in Meriden, CT. I would like to thank the Appropriations Committee, the General Assembly and the Governor's office for the funding for the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled.

I have been living with multiple sclerosis for over thirty years. I taught music, theater and martial arts the the Meriden school system for twenty-seven years. I never let the progression deter me from sharing my love of the arts with my students and often I was an example of how not to let difficulties stop one from reaching a goal.

Over the past few years I have experienced a significant decline in my physical abilities. I had two major hospitalizations and rehabilitation hospital stays in 2004 and 2008. Each time I had been working and was able to get back to work with the help of home care, physical therapy and the CT Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. My insurance covered home care and it was critical to maintaining my independence.

I retired from teaching, and realized that I needed a part time job to pay my bills. I am single and own a condo. I now work at Target part-time. It has been a great experience, however even with the income; I have not been able to afford the health benefits that I had when I worked. I am very concerned about this.

In 2011, I was hospitalized for a week with an MS attack and then spent one month in a nursing home for rehab. This time it took much longer to get stronger. I was not sure when I would be strong enough to come home, let alone go back to work at Target.

My townhouse has been retrofitted, as best as possible, for my needs, it is still difficult to do the daily chores. I need assistance with some cooking, laundry and at times personal care. I know many others like me have similar problems in their daily lives and we are all trying to get through the day. Home care is crucial for the needs of many whom have physically debilitating diseases, but can still contribute to our cities, towns and state in our workforce.

Please continue to support the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled (CHCPD) which is a pilot program that provides care coordination, home care and support for 41 people in CT between the ages of 18 to 64. The participants in the program are individuals who are living with degenerative neurological disabilities who are not eligible for other programs.

For all of those on the program and on the waiting list, we are just one medical crisis away from going to a nursing home. This program helps people to remain in their homes.

Thank you.

Thomas K. Maloney

