



STATE OF  
CONNECTICUT  
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



Human Services Committee

Testimony

March 1, 2012

**IN FAVOR OF:** S.B. No. 231 (RAISED) AN ACT MODIFYING THE KATIE BECKETT HOME CARE WAIVER PROGRAM.

My Name is Molly Cole and I am the Executive Director of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Council is in support of SB 231, to modify the Katie Beckett Waiver. This waiver has been in Connecticut since the 1980's, as a Model Waiver, with specific caps on the number of people served. The Katie Beckett Waiver serves individuals who require a skilled level of care (RN, LPN, and Home Health Aide) to live in their homes. The cost of that care must be cost neutral, meaning that it cannot exceed the cost of placement in a skilled nursing facility or ICF/MR. The waiver has been capped at 200 slots for many years, and has a waiting list of approximately four years. Most of the individuals on the waiting list are children with disabilities who require very complex care, and whose families are struggling to meet those care needs at home. This waiver program has supported numerous children and some adults with complex care needs who are now able to live in their homes and communities. For many families this skilled support at home has meant they can work, obtain insurance through their employers, and share in the cost of the care for their child.

This bill will put an age cap on the waiver. The Council believes this is an appropriate change to the waiver. This program was specifically established to assist children who are residing with their parents. The Katie Beckett program waives the deeming of parental income and allows children to become eligible without consideration of their family's income/assets. Adults with disabilities are generally able to access Medicaid and have no need to access coverage through the Katie Beckett waiver beyond age 21.

Estimates from DSS indicate that about eight adults are currently on the program and could be moved onto other Medicaid coverage. Moving those individuals to other coverage will allow at least eight more children to be covered through this program, within current appropriations.

Recent discussions with staff at Money Follows the Person indicate that this change to the Katie Becket Waiver was specifically made to accommodate children currently served through MFP. The Council is concerned that other children, who may have been on the waiting list for this program for many years, will be passed over to accommodate children moved out of hospitals through MFP. While we fully support Money Follow the Person, and the need to move these children out of hospital settings, we are also cognizant of the significant needs of the many families who have been waiting for assistance. We would oppose skipping over those who have been waiting many years to receive supports through the Katie Beckett waiver. Additionally the bill would remove the cap of 200 slots, providing opportunity in the future to expand the number of children served through this program.

Again, the Council is encouraged at these changes to the program. Even though the number served will continue to be limited through current available appropriations, we feel that these modifications offer more hope for families who have children with complex care needs and disabilities when economic times improve and there is an opportunity to increase the appropriation.

Thank you.

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