

February 27, 2012

Raised Bill No. 235

An act concerning Municipal Agents for the Elderly

Hi. I'm Judy Jencks the Senior Coordinator/Municipal Agent for the Town of Lisbon, a member of the Commission on Aging, both at the state and the town level, and the President for CAMAE, the CT Association for Municipal Agents for the Elderly. I am giving testimony as Judy Jencks and not as a representative of any other group.

I first became aware of raised bill no. 235 a few weeks ago and was shocked that DSS was suggesting the interaction between the state and Municipal Agents for the Elderly be weakened. Connecticut is aging much faster than most other states. Today we have over a half million seniors and we all know the flood gates will open as the baby boomers join the ranks. We can expect to be serving a million+ by 2016.

Raised Bill No. 235 wants the interaction between Municipal Agents for the Elderly And DSS to be less when in fact there should be more. I recently was asked a housing question and when I referred to my Elderly Housing Directory that was prepared by DSS Elderly Services Division I noticed it was dated May 2000. We have not received a compiled Municipal Agents for the Elderly Annual Report since 2005.

DSS Elderly Services has been approached several times about creating a system in which Municipal Agents for the Elderly could obtain certification similar to Town Clerks, Assessors, Tax Collectors, etc to no avail. Municipal Agents for the Elderly have asked for more training not less. Some, perhaps many, go to the Massachusetts Conference.

CT needs to become proactive. We need DSS to do more not less. We need current information. We need training, workshops and conferences. It is impossible for any of us to stay current in an ever changing field by ourselves. We are not islands but members of a team.

Please don't take any action in regard to this bill. Let's sit down and create a plan that works for both sides.