



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services
Council on Developmental Services

DDS

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

March 13, 2012

Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski, and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

Testimony to the Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re: HB NO. 5433 - AN ACT CREATING A PROCEDURE FOR PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN WITH THE STATE

My name is James Heffernan and I serve as Chairman of the Council on Developmental Services. The Council, under the General Statutes of Connecticut, is charged to *"recommend to the Governor and to the General Assembly such legislation as will in its judgment improve the care and training of persons with intellectual disability. C.G.S. Section 17a-270 as amended by PA 11-16.* We are writing today to advise you of serious concerns that we have related to both Executive Order # 10, which gave rise to the captioned bill, and HB # 5433 itself.

We urge you to oppose the implementation of Raised Bill # 5433 since we feel that it will endanger the level of service that consumers currently receive and erode the "Safety Net" that the Executive and the Legislative Branches have worked to protect.

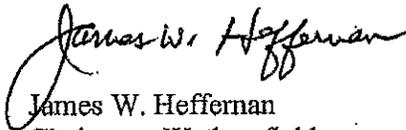
The Council strongly believes that the relationships that exist between consumers and the independent staff that they directly employ should be protected, remain private and not be interfered with by executive order or by legislation. Consumers should control their own lives and have the right to choose whom they will employ...especially due to the intimate nature of services that are often provided.

We have a system in place that is effective, efficient and extremely workable. Unfortunately, the proposed bill will not enhance today's state funded program. Rather, it will add bureaucracy and bloat costs. As a result, self determination, individual choice and ultimately the level of support services delivered will be curtailed significantly if the concept of forcing representation and collective bargaining for Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) is implemented. It is the Council's judgment that this is not necessary and, thus, it is strongly opposed to HB # 5433.

Medicaid waivers dictate allowable pay rates for PCAs; this is an important issue that the legislature must be aware of as decisions are made. Due to current economic circumstances, the state is not in a position to appropriate larger funding allocations to cover the increased costs that would be associated with the Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council. *Simply stated, the proposed legislation will result in the curtailment of the number of service hours that are critically needed by many consumers. The people who need PCA services deserve better than that.*

The Council on Developmental Services is available to discuss this issue further should you wish to do so. Thank you for considering the points that we have raised. We urge you to act in the best interests of our constituents and allow them to continue to conduct their lives as independently as possible.

Sincerely,



James W. Heffernan
Chairman, Wethersfield

Connecticut Council on Developmental Services
Patrick Vingo, Vice Chairman, South Norwalk
Dr. John Pelegano, Secretary, Glastonbury
Donna Bouteiller, Cheshire
Jennifer Carroll, Glastonbury
David Hadden, Simsbury
Sheila Mulvey, Southington
John N. Frost, Essex
Jamie Lazzaroff, Hampton
Patti Silva, Wethersfield
Louis Richards, Waterbury
Thomas Kalal, East Lyme

cc: Governor Dannel P. Malloy
Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman
Senator Donald E. Williams, Jr., Senate President Pro Tempore
Representative Christopher G. Donovan, Speaker of the House
Senator John McKinney, Senate Minority Leader
Representative Lawrence F. Cafero, Jr., House Minority Leader