

Rhonda Boisvert, Connecticut Association of Residential Care Homes
Testimony Opposing
**HB 5322 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESSURE REDISTRIBUTION MATTRESSES
AND PATIENT CARE IN NURSING HOME FACILITIES**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee.

My name is Rhonda Boisvert, the owner of Pleasant View Manor in Watertown, an 18-bed residential care home. I am also the past President of the CT Association of Residential Care Homes (CARCH).

Residential care homes provide a home for many elderly and disabled people in our communities who have reached the time in their lives when they can no longer live alone. RCHs are “home-like” and tend to be small. The average size home is 25 beds.

I am here today to testify in opposition to HB 5322- An Act Concerning Pressure Redistribution Mattresses and Patient Care in Nursing Home Facilities, which would require all residential care homes to replace all mattresses with pressure-redistribution mattresses before October 1, 2015. We ask that residential care homes be removed from this proposed legislation.

Residential Care Home (RCH) is a model of care and support that is for people who need assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), not nursing care. Our residents are not bedridden, they don't use wheelchairs and they do not have pressure sores. Residents do not spend long periods of time, beyond sleeping overnight in their beds or sitting in one place. Residents come to the dining room for breakfast, lunch and dinner and participate in activities during the day. While they are free to nap as they wish, residents of RCHs are up and about. In fact, most residents spend the better portion of the day outside of their rooms, some out of the building. RCH residents do not have pressure sores and don't require pressure redistribution mattresses.

Further, residential care homes are homes, not facilities nor institutions. We encourage our residents to make their rooms as personal and homelike as they wish. This is very important to them. Requiring a hospital bed with a pressure redistribution mattress is both unnecessary and unfair to our residents.

Additionally, requiring RCHs to purchase these mattresses is an unnecessary financial burden. For the past three years our rates have been capped. This legislation would require homes to replace every mattress by 2015, no matter what the condition of the mattress may be. Pressure treated mattresses are also two to three times more expensive than normal mattresses. This cost may not seem like a lot but when added up could cost some homes several thousand dollars. This is money that homes do not have in these difficult economic times. Therefore, we ask that you remove residential care homes from the proposed legislation.

Thank you for your time and attention.