



## SB 522 (RAISED) AN ACT INCREASING FUNDING FOR ELDERLY NUTRITION

Testimony before the Aging Committee  
February 5, 2013

Good day, Senator Ayala, Representative Serra and members of the Aging Committee. My name is Lucy Nolan and I am the Executive Director of End Hunger Connecticut!. End Hunger Connecticut! Is a statewide anti-hunger and food security organization and we are concerned about nutrition for the elderly. We are currently working with the AARP Foundation on SNAP outreach for older adults in the state and know that there are many who rely on the food that is offered to them through the elderly nutrition program. I am here to testify in support of SB 522, An Act Increasing Funding for Elderly Nutrition.

In 2012 there were 1,256,014 home delivered meals served to 6,340 individuals over 60 years old, and 811,055 congregate meals served to 18,008 older adults in Connecticut. In total, there were 2,067,069 meals were served through the Elderly Nutrition Program in Connecticut in FY 2012. Last year, 43,653 households receiving SNAP had at least one member aged 60 or over, and 40,697 households receiving SNAP had only older adults in the household (a total of 237,653 Connecticut households received SNAP last year) .

According to *Senior Hunger – The Human Toll and Budget Consequences*, a report compiled by Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders chair of the subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging , US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (6/21/2011) notes that approximately 50% of all health conditions impacting older adults are directly connected to a lack of nutrients. The cost of one year supply of home-delivered meals is roughly equal to the cost of one day in a hospital.

End Hunger Connecticut! works with communities and schools on the federal food programs. What these programs have in common is that they have specific nutrition rules. The elderly meals are based on the dietary reference intakes (DRIs) established by the Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and amounts are dependent on how many meals are served.

I would like to suggest that this committee use Connecticut's current Healthy Food Certification as an example for the elderly nutrition meals. Certain dietary restrictions would be imposed to those making the meals to have them be as healthy as possible. Limited salt, sugar, foods that may cause acid issues and other foods would be reduced while healthier foods that taste better would be required. Those contracted to make the meals would be given up to 10 cents per meal served to pay for this increased nutrition.

We should not be looking to the cheapest contract to pay for the food for older adults. We need to make the commitment to care for the elderly and to ensure they have every opportunity to be healthy. While the Elderly Nutrition meals serve other purposes such as socialization and the ability for caretakers to check in with those receiving the meals, the point is to feed them so they are not hungry. Those meals should be quality food. This bill would allow that to happen.

I urge this committee to pass this bill for increased funding for the Elderly Nutrition Program.

Thank you.