



February 22, 2013

Regarding: Public Hearing on Governor's Bill 6350

Dear Appropriations Committee Members,

The National Coalition for Assistive & Rehab Technology (NCART) is an organization comprised of companies that manufacture and provide customized wheelchairs and other specialized equipment for Connecticut citizens who are in great need of our products and services for their health, welfare and safety.

Two Connecticut based companies, ATG Rehab of Rocky Hill and Hudson Seating & Mobility of Newington, are members of NCART and on their behalf we are respectfully requesting that the following information be shared with the Appropriations Committee and submitted into the record:

Governor's Bill 6350 – An Act Concerning the Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2015, and Other Provisions Relating to Revenue, contains a proposal under which the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) would save \$4.5M in both FY14 and FY15 by revising the approval process for Customized Wheelchairs in nursing facilities.

Although NCART member companies are always more than willing to continue to work with DSS professionals to identify aspects of the current approval process where savings and efficiencies can be identified and implemented, we are very concerned regarding the \$4.5M savings estimate for each of the next 2 fiscal years. We support the concepts of savings and efficiencies, but we don't want our clients in nursing facilities – who always have very significant physical and medical challenges – to suffer needlessly in the process.

We are hoping to continue our open dialogue with DSS and with the Connecticut Legislature regarding the importance of customized wheelchair products and services for Connecticut citizens who have significant physical and medical challenges. In almost all cases, a resident of a Nursing Facility who has access to a customized wheelchair is far less likely to have severe medical and health complications that would then require the person to seek much more expensive care in a hospital setting.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our concerns regarding Governor's Bill 6350.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Clayback".

Donald E. Clayback

Executive Director

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