

**TESTIMONY OF Rhonda Boisvert, Vice President,
Connecticut Association of Residential Care Homes**

IN OPPOSITION TO

**HB 6350- AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING
JUNE 30, 2015, AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO REVENUE.**

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Rhonda Boisvert. I am the owner of Pleasant View Manor and Vice President of the Connecticut Association of Residential Care Homes. I am here today to testify in strong opposition to the Governor's budget cuts to residential care homes.

The rates for most Ct. Residential Care Homes have been capped for the last four years. A few homes have had a slight increase but are in danger of going back to their previous rates.

Residential Care Homes provide an incredible financial value to the State of Ct. An average daily rate is between \$82.00 and \$88.00 per day. Some homes get more and some get less. We provide 3 healthy meals and 2 snacks. We transport or get medical cabs to take residents to appointments. We provide medication monitoring. We provide recreation. Most of all our facilities are clean and we work hard to follow state regulations. This is all while working with the most vulnerable populations in the state, the mentally disabled and the elderly.

New regulations that have recently been imposed on our homes have only increased our costs in liability insurance. Despite this homes have reduced costs to the State. Homes have saved the State several hundred thousand dollars by taking over the drug administration for our residents from the visiting nurses who were costing the State hundreds of thousands of dollars. Nevertheless, our rates have remained capped and costs have continued to rise.

Perhaps the most important information for the Appropriations Committee to know is about the population that residential care homes serve. We no longer have the 80 and 90 year old residents who were happy to watch television and play bingo once in a while. Our population now consists of any age over 21. In my home every resident has a psychiatric diagnosis. My employees work on a 1 to 18 ratio.

If a resident acts out, the employee must do some quick thinking. The population that we serve is the very population that the media is talking about. We are the homes that take care of those people. Our employees are not compensated in pay or insurance benefits as state employees who work with the same population.

Many Residential Care Home Operators, including myself, are finding it more and more difficult to manage our homes with no new revenue and our expenses continuing to rise by the day.

I have been here to testify on many occasions. We strongly object to the rate cap being proposed. The rate cap for the past four years has already caused much hardship to the Operators and our residents. Further rate caps will certainly result in more hardship and closure of more homes. This will be very sad and will be a great loss to the State, who will have to rehouse the residents at alternative accommodation, albeit, at a much higher cost. I, therefore, urge you to please lift any rate capping of the Residential Care Homes.

Respectively, Rhonda Boisvert
Owner, Pleasant View Manor
Vice President, Connecticut Association of Residential Care Homes