LeadingAge Connecticut

Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

February 19, 2013

In Support of Maintaining the Commission on Aging

HB 6350, An Act Concerning the Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2015, and other Provisions Relating to Revenue

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership organization representing over one hundred and thirty mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults throughout the continuum of long term care. Our members are sponsored by religious, fraternal, community, and municipal organizations that are committed to providing quality care and services to their residents and clients. Our member organizations, many of which have served their communities for generations, are dedicated to expanding the world of possibilities for aging.

On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut, I would like submit the following testimony in support of maintaining the Commission on Aging.

The Commission on Aging was established to promote public policy that embraces best practices, national trends and statewide needs on issues such as senior housing, health care, long term care, and transportation. The Commission does just that with the guidance and insight of a representative volunteer board that provides knowledge, expertise, and an informed policy perspective. They are a valuable resource that must be maintained at this critical time in our state's history.

As a member of the Long Term Care Advisory Committee, LeadingAge Connecticut has greatly appreciated the leadership role of the Commission and its Executive Director. A unifying force, the Commission on Aging has brought together a diverse group of advocates to work toward the common goal of achieving a seamless system of long term care and has been a driving force in the state's current long term care systems change. They have also led the Advisory Committee's consolidated effort to develop a long term care needs assessment and they are currently working with the Advisory Committee to address the crisis in long term care Medicaid eligibility determination.

Their leadership on the issue of Livable Communities and Aging in Place has brought an even larger, more diverse group of stakeholders to the table for these important discussions. Municipalities, providers, consumers, policymakers and advocates are now all engaged in these important discussions and this work must continue as we face the historic aging of our state's population.

It is a critical time for aging and long term care issues and I would encourage the Appropriations Committee to support the Commission on Aging and to utilize it as the resource it is on issues related to long term care services and supports and the issues of aging in our state.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

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