Appropriations Committee Public Hearing

3/22/2013

HB 6354, Section 90

<u>In Opposition</u> to the Consolidation of the Legislative Commissions and the <u>Elimination of the Commission on Aging</u>

Testimony of Brian Capshaw, Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Residents Councils

Hello, my name is Brian Capshaw and I live at Aurora Senior Living of East Hartford. I'm testifying as a member of the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils representing all 26,000 Connecticut nursing home residents.

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the appropriations committee. As a nursing home resident I'm pleased to submit testimony to discuss Governor Malloy's proposed 2013-2015 biennium state budgets calling for the elimination of the Legislative Commission on Aging.

The Legislative Commission on Aging was established twenty years ago as a non-partisan research and public policy office of the Connecticut General Assembly. We are asking that you not target the Legislative Commission on Aging for elimination.

The Legislative Commission on Aging is the only state office that serves the legislature with research on all matters concerning the growing population of older adults in Connecticut. For the past twenty years the Legislative Commission on Aging has co-existed with the executive branch state unit on aging. The fact the state has now formed the State Department on Aging should not lead to the elimination of the Legislative Commission on Aging.

The Legislative Commission on Aging serves the legislature by developing and commenting on legislative proposals, as well as state departmental policies, procedures, structures that effect older adults and persons with disabilities in Connecticut. They also lead efforts to reduce spending on long term care services and supports which represents 13% of Connecticut's budget.

The Legislative Commission on Aging chairs or co-chairs several committees such as the Money Follows the Person Steering Committee, Aging in Place Task Force, the Long Term Care Advisory Council, the Connecticut Elder Action Network and

the highly active Council on Medical Assistance Program Oversight. As an attendee of the state mandated Long Term Care Advisory Council, a highly effective group of advocates, providers and consumers providing the state with direction to all long term care issues. They collaborate on the development of the states Long Term Care Plan and assist with recommendations regarding the states rebalancing efforts, and help in obtaining federal grants pertaining all areas long term care in Connecticut.

By supporting the Legislative Commission on Aging, you will be acting in the best interest of Connecticut's aging population; they make recommendations that improve the quality of life for older adults as well as the disabled community in Connecticut. The Legislative Commission on Aging saves the state money. Through their efforts on Medicaid spending they have saved the state millions and have leveraged millions of federal government dollars.

In conclusion the Legislative Commission on Aging with its modest budget of $240,000 and 3 employees should remain in place as a support commission to the legislature and the several committees they chair or co-chair. The work of the Legislative Commission on Aging is vitally important to the older adults and persons with disabilities in the state of Connecticut, so I ask for the states continued support of the Legislative Commission on Aging.

Thank you, ~ Brian Capshaw

Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Council