



Date: February 22, 2013

To: Human Services Committee c/o Kristen.traini@cga.ct.gov

Subject: Testimony on Human Services Budget

**TESTIMONY OF Donna Copeland, Director, Westcott Wilcox Elderly Residential Housing Inc.**  
***IN OPPOSITION TO***  
**HB 6367- AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS. Specifically section 9 cap of residential care home rates**

Senator Slossberg, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Donna Copeland. I am the Director of Westcott Wilcox Elderly Residential Housing Inc. I am unable to attend but want to offer my strong opposition to section 9 of HB 6367 capping Residential Care Home Rates.

Residential care home rates should be increased not capped. Without rate increases we cannot keep up with the rising costs of heating fuel, electricity, food, property and liability insurance and workers compensation insurance. Many homes, including mine are putting off repairs to the property because we can't afford to spend money we don't have. If rates are not increased our ability to upkeep the property and stay in business will be in jeopardy. Residential care homes are more cost effective for the state then nursing homes. We provide low cost housing to individuals who are not capable of living independently. I have a two year waiting list for rooms. The local social service agencies are knocking at the door daily to try and get placement for individuals who are not safe in apartments because they can't be left alone. Many individuals put themselves in harm's way by not being able to prepare proper food safely and take their meds on time. At residential care homes we offer med reminders and prepare three healthy meals every day. Our staff is on sight to ensure that residents without the capacity to look out for themselves are not only watched but become an active member of our group home. Some of my residents would end up on the streets and others would end up in nursing homes if we shut down. The ones on the streets *will become a danger to themselves and others*. The ones in the nursing homes will cost the state much more than we are being reimbursed. Please consider this information as you proceed. Residential care homes need an increase in order to continue to upkeep our facilities, pay for the ever rising costs of fuel and insurances and to pay our staff more than the \$10.00 per hour that we offer today.

Sincerely

Donna Copeland