



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

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COMMISSIONER

Testimony by Patricia Rehmer, MSN, Commissioner
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Before the Human Services Committee
February 13, 2012

Good morning Sen. Slossberg, Rep. Abercrombie, and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee. I am Commissioner Patricia Rehmer of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and I am here this morning to speak in favor of, HB 6370 AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDIZED ASSISTED LIVING. I want to thank the Committee for your assistance in raising this proposal.

The proposal before you would allow DHMAS clients who are served by the Mental Health Home and Community Based Waiver and are 65 years of age or older to be eligible for the Assisted Living Demonstration Project. This will give DMHAS clients who are either in a nursing home or eligible for nursing home level of care another housing option in the community.

The Demonstration Project is in 4 cities, Hartford, Middletown, Glastonbury and Seymour and there are 226 slots available for this project. HB 6370 does not open up additional slots. It merely adds a new group of people who are eligible for this housing option. No specific slots would be dedicated to DMHAS clients and it would still be on a first come first served basis.

Currently, in order to be eligible to reside in one of the subsidized assisting living units in any of these demonstration projects, an applicant must be eligible for the CT Home Care Program. DMHAS is interested in identifying Mental Health Waiver clients who could be eligible for this program as well. DMHAS, through the CT Assisted Living Assoc. (CALA), discussed this issue with the four Demonstration communities and all four communities were receptive to the idea but wanted to insure we limited the program to individuals 65 years old & older as is the case for those people served by the CT Home Care Program. The issue was then brought to the Interagency Workgroup for the Demonstration Project, which includes representatives from CHFA, DSS, DPH, DECD & OPM. The Workgroup did not have an issue with the eligibility expansion as long as we were not adding any new slots or funding & the four Demo communities were all in agreement with the change. Since all of the Workgroup's criteria were met, the Workgroup gave their approval for this change.

Thank you giving us the opportunity to speak in support of this bill and I am willing to answer any questions you may have regarding this issue.