



Testimony of LeadingAge Connecticut

Submitted to the Environment Committee

Regarding House Bill 6439, An Act Concerning the Disposal and Collection of Unused Medication

February 25, 2013

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership organization representing over 130 mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of care including nursing homes, residential care homes, housing for the elderly, continuing care retirement communities, adult day centers, home care and assisted living agencies. We thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on ***House Bill 6439, An Act Concerning the Disposal and Collection of Unused Medication.***

LeadingAge Connecticut understands the emerging environmental concerns regarding the issue of proper pharmaceutical drug disposal and we certainly do not want to impede any effort to help improve our environment. However, because the passage of this bill would have an immediate financial impact on several LeadingAge Connecticut members, we ask that the committee take into consideration the financial needs of these providers as you contemplate this bill.

Disposal of unused medication can vary by setting and within settings. Pharmaceutical drugs on the premises of a skilled nursing facility that are outdated or otherwise obsolete must be disposed of in accordance with state public health and drug enforcement regulations as well as federal drug enforcement requirements and must be destroyed on the premises in a manner so as to render the drugs non-recoverable. This is why the facilities have historically utilized the waste water system as a method of disposal. While many providers have adopted alternative methods of disposal, not all have. Alternative methods, such as specially designed shredders, are costly and that cost is prohibitive for some providers. Skilled nursing facilities also participate in the state's *Nursing Home Drug Return Program*, but that program does not allow for the return of controlled substances.

While we do not like to focus on the costs associated with alternative methods of disposal, the reality is that the Medicaid reimbursement system does not currently reimburse long term care providers at a level that covers their costs and therefore we ask that the Committee take this into consideration. We respectfully request that the state provide the financial assistance necessary to allow health care providers to purchase the environmentally safe and cost efficient alternative methods of disposal for pharmaceutical drugs that would be in compliance with both state and federal regulations.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Respectfully submitted by Mag Morelli, LeadingAge Connecticut President,
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