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Public Health Committee
March 20, 2013
Testimony in Support of Senate Bill #1068
AN ACT AN ACT CONCERNING CARE COORDINATION FOR CHRONIC DISEASE
Submitted by AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of more than 37 million, nearly 600,000 of whom live right here in Connecticut, which helps people age 50 and up turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, caregiving, employment security and retirement planning.

AARP is supportive of efforts at the state and federal level that improve efficient delivery of optimal care for beneficiaries with chronic illness and disabling conditions that encourage:

- appropriate use of evidence-based interventions;
- interdisciplinary care teams composed of physicians, nurses, social workers, dietitians, therapists, pharmacists and others;
- appropriate use and timely monitoring of medications;
- greater affordability of medications;
- accelerated adoption of health information technology that contributes to improved care;
- rapid dissemination of information and adoption of effective, evidence-based chronic care interventions;
- support to family caregivers to help them become effective partners with professionals;
- greater emphasis on chronic care in clinical education and continuing education of health care professionals; and
- effective use of the health care workforce.

S.B. 1068 provides an opportunity to bring a variety of key constituencies to the table to analyze and recommend improvements for chronic care management and reduced incidence of chronic disease. However, AARP encourages the Committee to strengthen the proposal by modifying section 1(a) to require consultation with consumer representatives and patients with chronic conditions. In order to have meaningful dialogue and actionable policy recommendations, key constituencies including consumers, must have meaningful voice in the process.

There is an urgent and compelling need to address the poor care and high costs of those with chronic conditions. In 2005, more than 70 million Americans ages 50 and older—four out of five older adults—suffered from at least one chronic condition. More than half of older adults have two or more chronic conditions and 11 million live with five or more chronic conditions. A 2003 study found that, on average, U.S. adults received only 56 percent of recommended services for

chronic conditions. While progress has been made, there are large gaps in the quality and delivery of health care for people with chronic illness. Chronic conditions are costly for patients and payers; individuals with chronic conditions account for 83 percent of all health care spending.

If implemented properly, care coordination for people with chronic conditions can contain or reduce health care costs. AARP supports an inclusive stakeholder process that brings together health care providers, public officials, and consumers to recommend policy changes for the reduction of chronic disease in our state and improved care coordination for those with chronic diseases. Thank you.

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