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**Testimony of Peter Boorman
Elder Law Section**

IN SUPPORT OF

**RAISED BILL No. 5226
AN ACT INCREASING THE PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE**

**Aging Committee
FEBRUARY 25, 2014**

I am the Vice Chair of the Elder Law Section of the CT Bar Association. Our membership assists hundreds of nursing home residents who reside in nursing homes and are applying for or are receiving Medicaid. My testimony is submitted on behalf of these nursing home residents.

A couple of years ago, the State of Connecticut reduced the personal needs allowance for nursing home residents on Medicaid from \$69 to \$60 per month. The State of Connecticut also eliminated the annual increase based on the cost of living index. The personal needs allowance is the small amount of money that nursing home residents are allowed to keep from their monthly income to cover non-Medicaid related expenses. The bulk of the nursing home resident's income is used to cover the costs of their nursing home care, or to cover other expenses permitted by the Connecticut Department of Social Services.

With this \$60.00 a month, a nursing home resident is responsible for paying for his or her clothes, telephone, visit to hair dresser, personal items (such as toiletries and personal snacks) mail postage, internet, and computers. Sixty dollars is not enough to cover these costs.

We therefore urge you to support Raised Bill 5226, which would increase the personal needs allowance to \$72.00 per month and starting July 1, 2015 shall require a Social Security cost of living adjustment. This increase would enable nursing home residents to live with dignity, help maintain relationships with family and friends by having a phone and access to the internet, and pay for basic needs.