



Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

Regarding Affordable Senior Housing with Long Term Services and Supports

H.B. No. 5030 An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015

**Submitted by Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut
February 11, 2014**

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership organization representing over 130 mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults including not-for-profit providers of affordable senior housing. Our housing members are sponsored by religious, fraternal, community, and governmental organizations that are committed to providing quality housing, care and services to their residents. LeadingAge Connecticut commends the Governor's continued support and investment in affordable housing and we appreciate this opportunity to submit comments regarding the housing proposals contained in his midterm budget adjustments.

LeadingAge Connecticut is a strong proponent of the model of linking affordable senior housing with long term services and supports; a model that enables older adults to remain in the community and to age in place. We believe this model is one of the answers to our state's quest to balance the system of long term services and supports. Connecticut has already developed several nationally acclaimed models of senior housing with services including allowing assisted living services funded through the Home Care Program for Elders to be delivered within our state congregate and HUD 202 housing sites, and within the four pilot affordable assisted living demonstration sites. We have excellent models of providing affordable housing with services that we would like to see encouraged and replicated to meet the growing needs of our elderly population.

The investment in the model of linking affordable senior housing with long term services and supports is twofold. First, it requires the development of affordable housing sites that will allow older adults to continue to live in their communities. Unfortunately, the current wait to move into an apartment unit in such housing can be years long. Second, it requires an investment in the state funded and Medicaid waiver programs that actually provide the home care and assisted living services for our older adults who live in these affordable housing communities. **We strongly encourage the development of additional affordable senior housing sites, including congregate housing sites, where long term services and supports can be delivered through our Home Care Program for Elders. And we strongly support the continuing investment in the Home Care Program for Elders rate structure** so that the network of quality community based providers can meet the growing demand and challenges of our aging population residing our affordable housing communities.

LeadingAge Connecticut encourages the state to call upon the expertise of elderly housing providers for consultation and advice on the issues of senior housing with services and we would recommend the addition of elderly housing representation to the membership of the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing.

Thank you for consideration of these submitted comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Mag Morelli, President
LeadingAge Connecticut
1340 Worthington Ridge, Berlin, CT 06037
(860) 828-2903 www.leadingagect.org