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**Written testimony of Scott Ziskin, President and CEO, Paradigm Healthcare Development, LLC Concerning:**

**S.B. No. 104 (RAISED) AN ACT PROVIDING FINANCIAL RELIEF TO NURSING HOMES FOR UNCOMPENSATED CARE.**

Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Abercrombie and to the members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Scott Ziskin. I am the President and CEO at Paradigm Healthcare in Waterbury, Connecticut. We currently own and operate six nursing homes in the towns of South Windsor, Torrington, Waterbury, Prospect, New Haven, and West Haven, Connecticut. Our nursing homes have been long standing providers of nursing care in our communities. We have 663 beds and currently employ over 1100 hard working and caring staff. I am here this afternoon to ask the Human Services Committee to ask for your support for **S.B. No. 104 (RAISED) AN ACT PROVIDING FINANCIAL RELIEF TO NURSING HOMES FOR UNCOMPENSATED CARE.** This bill is being advanced by the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities (CAHCF), of which our organization is a member.

This legislation is badly needed to address the persistent and worsening problem of excessive delays in the long term care Medicaid eligibility determination process at the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) for skilled nursing facilities. Connecticut skilled nursing facilities and their residents are harmed by excessive delays in the eligibility determination process. As Medicaid applicants residing in nursing facilities await final disposition of their requests for state help, Connecticut nursing homes are simultaneously providing uncompensated care for periods of time often exceeding federal standard of promptness rules. This bill addresses this situation by requiring advanced payments for the money owed by the state. The bill also addresses the fundamental unfairness of requiring nursing facilities to pay provider taxes, penalties, interest and fees for care provided to Medicaid applicants and recipients, when no payment is being received from Medicaid for providing care due to excessive delays.

Our nursing homes are harmed by these excessive Medicaid eligibility and payment delays. Currently, in our six facilities we have 27 outstanding Medicaid Pending cases totaling over \$1.2M outstanding in Medicaid Pending dollars. Our average day in Accounts Receivable to collect our Medicaid Pending dollars is over 150 days. While we are taking care of these residents, feeding them, providing them with their critical nursing and psychosocial needs, we are not receiving any payment for our services. Additionally, for each day we care for our frail and elderly Medicaid Pending

recipients, our homes are paying a provider tax on that day. In essence, that totals over \$88,000 in provider taxes we pay to the State of Connecticut while we await the Medicaid approval and receive the revenue which was designed to cover the cost of the tax. This process, not only creates an environment of "free care" by our homes, in also adds additional cost in the payment of a tax before the revenue is technically collected to pay that tax.

CAHCF applauds and encourages the DSS efforts to modernize its eligibility systems and for their commitment to hire badly-needed eligibility staff to address delays across the entire public and medical assistance spectrum. However, the state's initiatives are not yet providing relief, and we are concerned the situation may continue to worsen. Please pass this bill. Our nursing home needs your help.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.